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TIME IS ON YOUR SIDE AT WOODLAND HEIGHTS' ER

Lufkin, TX (June 1, 2011) — When you're experiencing a health care emergency, the last thing you want to do is wait. Emergency medicine is about three things: compassion, skilled care and speed. Woodland Heights Medical Center knows the importance of prompt service – especially in the emergency room (ER). “That’s why Woodland Heights has launched a 30-Minute ER Service Pledge – to assure patients that we are dedicated not only to offering the best quality care, but also to providing that care as efficiently and quickly as possible,” said Casey Robertson, CEO.

When a patient enters the ER at Woodland Heights, the arrival time is noted. The 30-Minute ER Service Pledge begins the minute a patient checks in at the ER desk. “Our pledge is that a clinical professional will work diligently to initially see each patient within 30 minutes or less of their arrival to begin the evaluation and treatment. When the patient is seen by a clinical professional, defined as a physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner, the time is logged on the patient’s chart – so we can track our performance in keeping our pledge of low ER wait times,” said Robertson.

“While the goal of Woodland Heights’ ER pledge is to work diligently to initially see every patient within 30 minutes, the most critical health emergencies will always receive top priority,” said Dr. Hortencia Luna-Gonzales, ER Medical Director.

The hospital records and monitors many ER indicators as part of its ongoing quality improvement process. “One of the items we track is patient wait times in the ER to determine how efficiently we triage patients and get them to a clinical professional for initial evaluation and treatment,” said Robertson. “I’m

pleased to report that the vast majority of patients at Woodland Heights' ER were already being seen within 30 minutes of their arrival time.”

For March 2011 through May 2011, the average wait time in the Woodland Heights ER was 21 minutes.

“We believe this service pledge will distinguish us from other health care providers in the area, and underline our commitment to the people who live and work in Lufkin and surrounding communities,” he said.

“While we are committed to prompt and appropriate care for our ER patients, the 30-Minute ER pledge should not be misinterpreted as an effort to rush patients through the ER,” he adds. “Our process improvements focus on getting ER patients into a treatment room as quickly as possible, enabling our clinical professionals to see a patient and begin diagnosis and treatment in a timely manner.”

The community can view Woodland Heights' average ER wait time -- based on a two-hour rolling average, updated every 15 minutes – on the internet at www.woodlandheights.net.

About Woodland Heights Medical Center

Established in 1918, Woodland Heights Medical Center was Lufkin's first hospital. Now, nine decades later, Woodland Heights is recognized throughout Deep East Texas as the leading provider of high quality, innovative health care services. Accommodating a wide range of clinical specialties, Woodland Heights has achieved excellence in key medical and surgical areas including cardiology, pulmonology, neurology, orthopedic surgery, physical medicine/rehabilitation, vascular surgery and obstetrics and gynecology. Woodland Heights also offers a full range of outpatient diagnostic services including advanced imaging, laboratory, outpatient surgery and emergency services. Through its Rehabilitation Center, Woodland Heights offers cardiac rehabilitation, stroke recovery and physical and occupational rehabilitation. Combining modern facilities, leading technology, an exceptional staff and a commitment to the communities it serves, Woodland Heights Medical Center remains at the forefront of quality health care in Deep East Texas.

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