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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

West Jacksonville Medical Center Closer to Becoming a Reality

State Approves HCA's Decision to Build New Westside Hospital

Jacksonville, FL (December 11, 2009) - The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) has granted HCA a Certificate of Need (CON) for the construction of a hospital in western Duval County. This area has been identified as one underserved by acute care hospitals. The hospital will be called West Jacksonville Medical Center.

"We are very pleased with the State's decision and have been delighted with the reception and support we have received from the Westside community," said Jim Wood, President & CEO of Memorial Hospital. "The residents of the Westside are very anxious to improve their access to care in this growing community."

The need for a new acute care hospital has largely been driven by the distance and travel time residents must drive to the nearest facility. The lack of a local hospital with its own Emergency Department and other services has long been an inconvenience to Westside residents.

HCA's plans include a three-story, 85-bed community hospital, as well as a 200,000 sq. ft. medical office building. Services provided will include an emergency department, cardiac cath lab, obstetrical unit, operating rooms, intensive care unit, medical/surgical unit and extensive diagnostics services, including MRI and CT scan.

The location has yet to be determined, but has been narrowed to areas near the Cecil Commerce Center/Chaffee Road areas.

Construction will cost approximately \$100-130 million and will provide an estimated 250 people with jobs during the two year building phase. Once West Jacksonville Medical Center is complete, an estimated 800 people will be needed for ongoing employment at the hospital. This will generate a local impact of approximately \$60 million from payroll and benefits.

Being a private hospital, Duval County residents will not see their taxes rise due to the project. In fact, HCA expects to pay an additional \$1 million per year in property taxes and \$1.7 million in sales tax each year related to West Jacksonville Medical Center.

For more information about West Jacksonville Medical Center, please visit us at:
<http://www.westjaxmedical.com/>

Note (updated January 11, 2010): The next steps in the approval process for West Jacksonville Medical Center includes requesting a formal hearing in front of an administrative law judge to learn if any formal objections have been filed to this plan by other hospitals and/or providers. This hearing may take place in June 2010.