



## Heart Transplant Services Returning to OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center

### For immediate release

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**(Peoria, IL | January 15)** – OSF HealthCare is excited to announce that the Heart Transplant Program will soon return to OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center. The Illinois Health Facilities & Services Review Board today approved OSF HealthCare’s certificate of need application to re-establish the program. This Heart Transplant Program will be the only one in central and downstate Illinois, and will be a destination center for both transplants and ventricular assist device procedures (VAD), offering our patients and others in our service area a second chance to celebrate the gift of life.

“OSF HealthCare Cardiovascular Institute at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center provides one of the most comprehensive cardiovascular programs in the state, embracing advanced techniques and technologies. A missing component has been heart transplant services,” said Bob Anderson, President, OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center. “We are very pleased to be part of providing this important service to our community.”

Heart transplant capabilities will add to the transplant services already offered at OSF Saint Francis, as it is currently a designated transplant center for other organs. The Heart Transplantation Program at OSF Saint Francis was first established in 1987 and suspended in 2006 due to decreasing volume and physician retirements. Over its 19-year duration, the Program successfully completed 197 heart transplants. The first recipient is now 86 years old and returns to OSF Saint Francis Medical Center twice a year for check-ups.

“Adding the heart transplant program at OSF Saint Francis will strengthen what is already a premier cardiovascular disease program in the state of Illinois,” said Dr. Barry Clemson, Heart Failure Medical Director, OSF HealthCare Cardiovascular Institute. He continued, “This will provide the patients we serve within OSF Healthcare System - and those referred to us for advanced heart failure treatment - the ability to obtain mechanical circulatory support and transplant services closer to home.”

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, and it is estimated that heart diseases are prevalent in more than 1 in 3 adults aged 18 or older. That is approximately 94.6 million adults. Heart failure is a rapidly growing public health issue. The number of people diagnosed with heart failure (those who are potential candidates for a heart transplantation) is expected to rise 46 percent by 2030.

“By end-stage heart failure, you’ve lost a lot. You’re burnt out, and you need a lot of help,” said Dr. Emmanuel Amulraj, who will serve as the surgical director of the heart transplant program at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center. “This program is giving heart failure patients a second chance at life, and a lot of them will go on to do everything they want to do. When you hear these testimonials, you know you’re doing the right thing. You know you did something good when you give them a second chance.”

While the full implementation of the heart transplant program could take up to 18 months, we expect the first VAD procedure to take place in the summer of 2019.

OSF HealthCare is constantly looking for new opportunities to provide the best care possible for the residents of central Illinois and beyond. Any new service offered at OSF HealthCare first requires extensive research, as well as adherence to any regulatory requirements. We look forward to sharing more information about our Heart Transplant Program as soon as it is possible to do so.