



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Care Integration Comes to Southern Illinois with New Partnership  
Between Nationally Recognized Cardiology Groups**

*Belleville, IL* - Cardiology Consultants, Ltd. of Belleville, Illinois and Prairie Cardiovascular Consultants of Springfield, Illinois are joining forces to bring a new level of heart and vascular care to the residents of southern Illinois.

Both of these highly-successful and nationally recognized groups of cardiologists have dedicated themselves since the 1970s to providing outstanding cardiovascular care that meets the unique needs of every patient and community they serve.

"This is indeed a rare opportunity to make a real difference in how heart and vascular care is delivered in our region and within the new national vision for health care," said Dr. Atul Shah of Cardiology Consultants.

With the addition of seven Cardiology Consultants physicians, Prairie Cardiovascular Consultants now includes over 50 cardiologists who specialize in every aspect of heart and vascular diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation. The focus of Prairie Cardiology Consultants is to provide highly accessible, comprehensive, protocol-based heart and vascular care to the residents of southern Illinois.

"The dedication of both our groups to the needs of the patient and their physician have always been of paramount importance and is a common thread that binds us

together and makes this partnership possible,” said Dr. Marc Shelton, president of Prairie Cardiovascular.

Both cardiology groups have had a long-standing relationship with Hospital Sisters Health System, an Illinois-based Catholic health care system with 13 hospitals in Illinois and Wisconsin that includes area hospitals of St. Elizabeth’s in Belleville, St. Joseph’s Hospital in Breese, and St. Joseph’s Hospital in Highland. This new partnership is the result of Hospital Sisters Health System’s care integration goal to strengthen the collaboration between health care professionals who share the same commitment to exceptional quality.

For the patients of the region, health care value comes from the strength of the partnership that is part of a top-quality leading network. The biggest benefit of the new partnership is the ease and convenience for patients to access cardiovascular care close to home instead of traveling to Missouri.

“Nearly 30% of Illinoisans in southern Illinois have chosen to seek heart care in Missouri. One of our goals is to communicate to the residents of this region that the quality of heart care in our region is equal to or better than that across the river. Quality heart care is as close as a Prairie Cardiology Consultant Cardiologist,” said Jim Zito, CEO of the Prairie Heart Institute of Illinois.

The combination of outstanding heart and vascular care delivered in a setting that is convenient not only for the patient but for the family is the best of both worlds.

Cardiology Consultants is already an established leader in cardiology services and has been a valued partner with St. Elizabeth’s Hospital for over 35 years providing quality cardiovascular care to the residents of southern Illinois. Cardiology Consultants will continue its practice in the same location, 340 W. Lincoln St., Suite 400, on the campus of St. Elizabeth’s.

St. Elizabeth’s Hospital offers a comprehensive list of cardiac services that will support the top quality services offered by this newly formed partnership. Currently

over 3,700 diagnostic and interventional procedures are performed in the cardiac catheterization lab each year and the hospital received chest pain center re-accreditation from the Society of Chest Pain Centers.

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**About Hospital Sisters Health System**

Hospital Sisters Health System is a Roman Catholic health care mission founded to continue the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. Sponsored by the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, HSHS provides state-of-the-art health care framed in traditional values taught by St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi. It is dedicated to serving all people, including the poor and the needy, at each of its 13 Local Systems and physician practices in Illinois (Belleville, Breese, Decatur, Effingham, Highland, Litchfield, Springfield and Streator) and Wisconsin (Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Sheboygan and two in Green Bay). For more information about HSHS, visit [www.hshs.org](http://www.hshs.org).