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JAPANESE CONTINGENT TO VISIT ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL AS PART OF UNITED STATES TRIP

BELLEVILLE, IL, February 14, 2007 -- A contingency of surgeons, nurses, hospital professionals and nuns from the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis Province in Japan will be visiting St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Belleville on Thursday, February 15, 2007.

The 14-member group will be touring St. Elizabeth's as part of a three-city tour in the US to observe medical techniques, systems of management and facility operation. In addition to visiting St. Elizabeth's the group also will be visiting St. Mary's Hospital in Decatur, Illinois and St. John's Hospital in Springfield, Illinois.

"We are very excited to welcome this group to St. Elizabeth's," stated Tim Brady, St. Elizabeth's Chief Executive. "It is important for us all to learn what's

done in other cultures and countries in terms of medicine. This helps improve patient care for everyone”

The group is representing St. Mary Hospital in Himeji, Japan and St. Francis Hospital in Nagasaki, Japan. Both of the hospitals are sponsored by the Japan Province of the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis. The motherhouse of the Hospital Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis is based in Germany, with provinces in Japan, Poland, India and the United States.

Members of the visiting medical team from St. Mary in Himeji include Yuji Nabeshima - Chief Orthopedic Surgeon, Takako Yamanaka - Director of Nursing, Sister Philippa Sato Chief Pharmacist and staff physicians. St. Francis in Nagasaki will be represented by Takeyuki Omagari - Vice Director and Chief Surgeon and Hideaki Takeguchi – Manager of Finance.

St. Elizabeth’s Hospital is a 506-bed acute care medical facility that offers a full range of services with a medical staff representing more than 40 medical specialties and a staff of more than 1,600 employees. It is an affiliate of the Hospital Sisters Health System, a 13-member hospital system based in Springfield, Illinois. For more information, contact 618-234-2120 or www.sebh.org.

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