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Swedish Covenant Hospital Enters Second Year as Planetree Affiliate

Unique Program Helps Healthcare Providers Put Patients First

CHICAGO, Oct. 13 /PRNewswire/ -- Empanadas substituting for traditional hospital food, violinists strolling by patients' rooms and the soothing, healing touch of pre-surgical massage therapy -- all are changes that took place at Swedish Covenant Hospital during the past year since the Northwest Side hospital affiliated with the Planetree Alliance.

Planetree is a non-profit membership organization that works with hospitals and health centers to develop and implement patient-centered care in healing environments.

"We have always focused on putting patients first," said Mark Newton, chief executive officer of Swedish Covenant Hospital. "Our relationship with Planetree, which recently entered its second year, enhances our ability to implement change across the board to benefit all aspects of a patient's life and wellness." The Planetree model is patient-focused rather than provider-focused and includes environmental, spiritual, cultural arts and compassion as important elements of delivering excellence in healthcare.

Planetree initiatives Swedish Covenant Hospital implemented over the past year include:

- A cultural program brings the comfort foods of different ethnicities to patients; Korean favorites such as seaweed soup are already made from scratch in the hospital kitchen and Hispanic and Indian menus are

under development

- Art work from local artists featured in rotation throughout the hospital

- A massage therapy program that assists in stress management

- Weekly meditation classes held in the hospital chapel

- Student musicians strolling in and out of patient rooms and in common areas under a new music therapy initiative

- Employee training that focuses on improving patient interaction through role playing and scripting

"We are proud to be the only hospital affiliated with the Planetree Alliance in the Chicago area," said Newton. "The Planetree approach helps create everything a patient would want a hospital to be -- a home-like environment that supports dignity and healing in every way possible." Swedish Covenant Hospital is a comprehensive healthcare facility providing health and wellness services to the communities of Chicago's north side. As one of the few independent, nonprofit hospitals in the area, Swedish Covenant Hospital remains focused on its mission of compassionate care. More than 500 physicians join the hospital's nurses and professional staff to strengthen a foundation of excellence established nearly 120 years ago into a tradition that will endure. Swedish Covenant Hospital is a member of the Planetree Alliance, a membership organization that works to develop and implement care guidelines that put patients first. More information is available at <http://www.SwedishCovenant.org> .

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