NEW ORLEANS -- Today, Slidell Memorial Hospital ("SMH") and Ochsner Health System ("Ochsner") announced the signing of a Letter of Intent to form a strategic partnership focused on delivering the highest quality, coordinated, patient-centered care along with preventive healthcare and patient education, positioning both organizations for success in the new healthcare environment.

“Combining the complementary strengths of both organizations means we will be able to offer more to our patients together than we can apart,” said Bill Davis, CEO, Slidell Memorial Hospital. “We look forward to working with Ochsner to create an integrated system that delivers nationally recognized care to the citizens we serve.”

The partnership between Ochsner and SMH is neither a purchase nor an acquisition by either party. This is a partnership with a joint operating agreement meant to provide strategic benefits for both organizations, their physicians and, most importantly, their patients. Both organizations will be able to work collaboratively with physicians (employed and community) to share best practices, expand services and implement advanced, patient-centered technology with a focus on continued quality improvements and cost reduction by coordinating and improving resources.

The partnership also provides an opportunity for both institutions to realize future growth opportunities through sharing of best practices that continue to increase quality such as Ochsner’s Epic electronic medical record system. These advancements will result in more integrated care and better value for patients.

SMH will become part of the newly formed Ochsner Health Network and joint activity will be coordinated by a Strategic Oversight Committee that will include equal representation from both Slidell Memorial Hospital and Ochsner Health System. However, SMH will remain an independent community hospital with its current Board governing the hospital and each organization will retain its name and assets to allow them to continue doing the great things that have brought them to this point.

“The challenges we currently face as healthcare providers are unprecedented. There is no doubt the future of healthcare will be about partnership and collaboration,” said Warner Thomas, President and CEO, Ochsner Health System. “Partnerships like this one are crucial for stand-alone community hospitals.
and individual providers as well as for larger systems. We are lucky to have two organizations with common cultures partnering together to improve the delivery of healthcare and to continue to make our communities stronger and healthier.

“We take our responsibility to the citizens we serve very seriously,” said David G. Mannella, chairman, Slidell Memorial Hospital Board of Commissioners. “Our board and Slidell’s leadership team have focused for years on strengthening services offered, improving quality, nurturing community and physician relations and developing human capital,” added Mannella. “Although we have succeeded in continuing to provide high-quality services locally by being innovative, it is our responsibility to be forward-thinking – the simple reality for us, is that going it alone is not an option. A partnership with Ochsner Health System is the best opportunity for us to strengthen and expand our local healthcare offerings for generations to come.”

Working as a team, SMH and OHS will offer patients an even wider range of options when it comes to where they want to receive care.

“Both Slidell Memorial Hospital and Ochsner Health System are well known for offering the highest quality care, which is a testament to our physicians and care teams,” said Suzanne Mestayer, chair, Ochsner Health System Board of Directors. “We will work closely with Slidell Memorial Hospital to build a customized partnership that benefits patients, physicians and our staffs. Together, we are committed to continued investment in our communities.”

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**About Slidell Memorial Hospital**

Slidell Memorial Hospital is a full-service 229-bed acute care not-for-profit community hospital located at 1001 Gause Blvd., in the heart of Slidell. Founded in 1959, SMH serves as a primary healthcare resource for families in St. Tammany Parish, La.; and, Pearl River County, Miss. For more information, visit [http://www.slidellmemorial.org/](http://www.slidellmemorial.org/). The hospital’s main phone number is (985) 280-2200.

**About Ochsner Health System**

Ochsner Health System is Louisiana’s largest non-profit, academic healthcare system. Driven by a mission to Serve, Heal, Lead, Educate and Innovate, coordinated clinical and hospital patient care is provided across the region by Ochsner’s 13 owned, managed and affiliated hospitals and more than 50 health centers. Ochsner is the only Louisiana hospital recognized by U.S. News & World Report as a “Best Hospital” across nine specialty categories caring for patients from all 50 states and more than 90 countries worldwide each year Ochsner employs more than 15,000 employees, nearly 1,000 physicians in over 90 medical specialties and subspecialties and conducts over 750 clinical research studies. Ochsner Health System is proud to be a tobacco-free environment. For more information, please visit ochsner.org and follow us on Twitter and Facebook.