

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

## **Memorial Health Dwaine & Cynthia Willett Children's Hospital of Savannah Now Open**

*Savannah, GA (March 12, 2021)* — After years of planning and construction, the Memorial Health Dwaine & Cynthia Willett Children's Hospital of Savannah opened for patients on March 9. Following a ribbon cutting ceremony, pediatric patients were transported from the former children's hospital in the main hospital tower to the new freestanding facility.

Memorial has been home to southeast Georgia's only children's hospital since 1992 and plans for the stand-alone pediatric facility were announced in 2014. Construction began in earnest following Memorial's integration into HCA Healthcare in early 2018. "It's been a long-standing dream to build a freestanding children's hospital on our campus," said Shayne George, Memorial Health CEO. "I am so proud of the commitment of our Memorial Health team, our community and our parent company, HCA Healthcare, to make this facility a reality." The completed hospital is 90,000 square feet and was built at a cost of approximately \$66 million.

"The Children's Hospital of Savannah has all of the services and technology we need to provide exceptional care for kids," said Dr. Brad Buckler, physician-in-chief. Highlights of the new facility include an 18-room emergency department with two resuscitation rooms, four operating rooms with two induction rooms where parents can stay with their child while they are put to sleep, a pediatric imaging unit with MRI and CT capabilities and sedation suites, a 14-room pediatric intensive care unit and more. A team of 108 pediatric providers including 40 pediatric specialists will provide care at the Children's Hospital of Savannah. "We offer comprehensive

pediatric services so that our patients can receive the care they need close to home,” said Buckler.

In addition to its clinical capabilities, the Children’s Hospital of Savannah is also designed with many features to make a family’s stay more comfortable. “Family-centered care is a hallmark of the care we provide at the Children’s Hospital of Savannah,” said Heather Newsome, administrative director. Each of the 50 patient rooms has a sleeping area and shower so that parents are comfortable while staying with their child. Other amenities for the family include a laundry room, kitchen area, chapel and a café. The facility has a play room for younger patients as well as a teen room equipped with TVs and video games. A large outdoor playground is available for kids once they are able to go outside. The Children’s Hospital of Savannah also has a dedicated team of certified child life specialists to support patients and families during their stay. “One of our most special features is our resident facility dog, Penelope. She’s the newest member of our team and her job is to share some love with everyone,” said Newsome.

The new facility was designed just for kids with vibrant colors throughout, starting at the Tree of Colors in the main lobby. Our beautiful city is also reflected in the “All Things Savannah” theme, which incorporates several local areas in the design. Each clinical unit has its own color and unique Savannah theme. These colors also serve as wayfinding for the Children’s Hospital.

“The Memorial Health Dwaine & Cynthia Willett Children’s Hospital of Savannah will be a community resource for generations to come,” said George. “We look forward to providing safe, high-quality care for our patients and their families in this amazing new facility.”

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*Memorial Health provides the region's only Level I trauma center for the most acute illness and injuries, as well as dedicated children's, cancer and heart hospitals to serve a 35-county area in southeast Georgia and southern South Carolina. The system includes its flagship hospital – Memorial Health University Medical Center - a 681-bed academic medical center; Memorial Health University Physicians' primary and specialty care networks; a major medical education program and business and industry services. Memorial Health is a part of the HCA Healthcare family, the largest provider of care in the United States and the UK.*



