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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **HACKLEY HOSPITAL ACHIEVES NATIONAL CHEST PAIN CENTER ACCREDITATION**

MUSKEGON, MI, November 17, 2005 -- The Society of Chest Pain Centers (SCPC) designated Hackley Hospital as an Accredited Chest Pain Center. Hackley received full accreditation status from the national Accreditation Review Committee following an on-site visit. Hackley is the 5<sup>th</sup> accredited Chest Pain Center in Michigan, the only hospital on the western shoreline, and 163<sup>rd</sup> in the nation.

Heart attacks are the leading cause of death in the United States, with 600,000 dying annually of heart disease. More than five million Americans visit hospitals each year with chest pain and Hackley Hospital Emergency Department sees more than 4,500 patients with chest pain each year.

“The expertise of our committee of physicians and nurses and the dedicated efforts they put into place helped us meet national standards in the efficient treatment and management of patients,” says David Aslakson, RN, Cardiovascular and Chest Pain Coordinator. “National experts in the accreditation process evaluated and validated that we provide optimal patient care to meet these standards,” he continued.

The Chest Pain Center’s protocol driven and systematic approach to patient management allows physicians to reduce treatment time during the critical early stages of a heart attack, when treatments are most effective, and to better monitor patients when it is not clear whether they are having a coronary event. Such observation helps ensure that a patient is neither sent home too early nor needlessly admitted.

Hackley’s multi-disciplinary committee of physicians and nurses worked to identify and implement process improvements and within six months applied to the SCPC. “This is important for the patient outcomes given that we identify and treat them in the most efficient time,” says Dr. Robert Hoogstra, Hackley Hospital Emergency Center. “We’re constantly looking at processes to give them the most effective treatment,” he continued.

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Hackley's Chest Pain Center demonstrated its expertise and commitment to quality patient care by meeting or exceeding a wide set of stringent criteria and completing on-site evaluations by a review team from the SCPC. Hackley demonstrated expertise in these key areas:

- Integrating the Emergency Department with the local emergency medical system
- Assessing, diagnosing, and treating patients quickly
- Effectively treating patients with low risk for acute coronary syndrome and no assignable cause for their symptoms
- Having a functional design that promotes optimal patient care
- Ensuring Chest Pain Center staff competency and training
- Maintaining organizational structure and commitment
- Continually seeking to improve processes and procedures
- Supporting community outreach programs that educate the public to promptly seek medical care if they display symptoms of a possible heart attack

"The Chest Pain Center Accreditation process has assisted us in standardizing our approach to the patient with an actual or impending heart attack, and to efficiently evaluate and exclude coronary disease in other patients presenting with chest pain," says Dr. Michael Ratchford, Hackley's Vice President Medical Affairs.

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