

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Rice Memorial Hospital now designated as level 3 trauma hospital**

WILLMAR, Minn. (January 28, 2010) – The Minnesota Department of Health recently designated Rice Memorial Hospital as a Level 3 trauma hospital. Rice Memorial Hospital and staff voluntarily participated in the intense designation process to become part of Minnesota’s statewide trauma system. The process included an outside review of the hospital’s resources and capabilities to care for trauma patients. Rice met standards of commitment, clinical and equipment resources and staff training. The hospital also participates in a continuous performance improvement process.

“We are pleased to achieve this designation, which required tremendous dedication and commitment on behalf of our staff and physicians at Rice,” said Michael Schramm, Chief Executive Officer. “We’ve always had good people providing excellent service and now this designation demonstrates a system that leads to improved outcomes in patient trauma care.”

For a severely injured person, the time between sustaining an injury and receiving definitive care is the most important predictor of survival – the “golden hour.” The chance of survival diminishes with time; however, a trauma system enhances the chance of survival regardless of proximity to an urban trauma hospital.

“Our goal is to get people to the appropriate level of care they need as quickly as possible,” said Mary Nelson, RN, Trauma Coordinator, “and having this system in place helps us achieve that goal.”

“Trauma is the third leading cause of death in Minnesota,” said Minnesota commissioner of Health Dr. Sanne Magnan. “The goal of the trauma system is to decrease injured patients’ time to care by making sure their medical needs are

appropriately matched with hospital resources. With the designation of Rice Memorial Hospital as a level 3 trauma hospital, we are getting closer to our goal of ensuring that seriously injured Minnesotans have access to an organized system of trauma care wherever they are in the state.”

On average, trauma claims the lives of 2,400 Minnesotans annually. States with trauma systems have seen survival rates increase by 15 to 20 percent. Wide-scale participation in the voluntary trauma system ensures that a statewide, cooperative effort is in place to care for seriously injured patients.

Minnesota began developing a comprehensive statewide trauma system in August of 2005. Through its designation, Rice Memorial Hospital recognizes the vital role that communities, ambulance services, hospitals and healthcare professionals play in the care and management of trauma patients.

For more information, see the Minnesota Statewide Trauma System site at [www.health.state.mn.us/traumasystem/](http://www.health.state.mn.us/traumasystem/).

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