

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****March 27, 2009**

## Advocate, Rush, Loyola explore long-term care partnership

**Chicago, Ill.** – Advocate Health Care, Rush University Medical Center and Loyola University Health System announced this week that they have begun exploring a plan that would bring Advocate’s only long-term acute care hospital (LTACH), Advocate Bethany Hospital, into partnership with the RML Specialty Hospital family.

Established in 1987, RML treats more mechanically ventilated patients than any other facility in the nation. RML is located in Hinsdale and has received multiple awards and recognition from the National Association of Long-term Care Hospitals for its innovative methodologies in treating patients with complex medical conditions.

As a part of the proposed partnership, Advocate Bethany Hospital, would join the RML family, pending regulatory and Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board approvals. Serving Chicago’s West Side for more than 88 years, Bethany transitioned to a long-term acute care hospital in 2006. The conversion occurred following months of extensive research and collaboration with area hospitals to determine how best to meet the needs of the community.

“A partnership with RML will allow Bethany to strengthen and enhance the services we offer to our patients with serious illness or injuries that require extensive and individualized care beyond that offered in a traditional hospital setting,” said Lena Dobbs-Johnson, president, Bethany Hospital. “Bethany will benefit from RML’s long-term care best practices as well as their proven protocols and RML will also benefit from our successes in treating this special population of patients.”

The Letter of Intent (LOI), expected to be signed by all three organizations this week, signifies a milestone in the talks, as well as the commitment to finalize the partnership. Due to the confidential nature of the discussions, details surrounding the specific elements of the proposal are not yet available. However, senior leadership for all three organizations say a partnership would further augment the level of medical care available in greater Chicagoland to patients who require long-term hospitalization.

“With Advocate joining our partnership, we will be able to broaden our mission to provide exceptional health services to unique patients with long-term acute care needs,” said Jim Prister, president and chief executive officer, RML Specialty Hospital. “RML and all three of these renowned health care systems share complimentary visions, a commitment to provide our patients with quality health care and a passion to give back to our communities.”

“Advocate also shares RML’s commitment to clinical research,” said Lee Sacks, M.D., executive vice president and chief medical officer, Advocate Health Care. “Research is critical in uncovering the root causes of conditions, determining alternative treatments and improving patient outcomes.”

Next steps in the partnership formation will include the completion of a definitive agreement, a due diligence period and ultimately regulatory approval.

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*RML is a freestanding hospital licensed in the State of Illinois and is recognized by Medicare as a long-term acute care hospital (LTACH). RML is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit limited partnership, whose current members are Rush University Medical Center and the Loyola University Health System. RML's clinical focus is on ventilator weaning (respiratory), complex medical, and wound services. Because of these programs, RML has historically maintained one of the highest case mix levels among any LTACH in the country. Patients treated at RML are referred from approximately 65 hospitals in Illinois. Patients primarily come from ICUs, critical care units, burn units, and step down units.*

*Advocate Health Care, a nationally-ranked health system, is the largest health care provider in Illinois. Advocate operates more than 200 sites of care across metropolitan Chicago, including nine acute care hospitals, two children's hospitals, four Level I trauma centers (the state's highest designation in trauma care), a home health care company and the region's largest medical group. As a non-profit, mission-based health system affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the United Church of Christ, Advocate contributed more than \$344 million in charitable care and services to communities across Chicagoland in 2007.*

*Rush University Medical Center is an academic medical center that encompasses the more than 600 staffed-bed hospital (including Rush Children's Hospital), the Johnston R. Bowman Health Center and Rush University. Rush University, with more than 1,730 students, is home to one of the first medical schools in the Midwest, and one of the nation's top-ranked nursing colleges. Rush University also offers graduate programs in allied health and the basic sciences. Rush is noted for bringing together clinical care and research to address major health problems, including arthritis and orthopedic disorders, cancer, heart disease, mental illness, neurological disorders and diseases associated with aging.*

*Based in the western suburbs of Chicago, Loyola University Health System is a quaternary care system with a 61-acre main medical center campus, the 36-acre Gottlieb Memorial Hospital campus and 25 primary and specialty care facilities in Cook, Will and DuPage counties. The medical center campus is conveniently located in Maywood, 13 miles west of the Chicago Loop and 8 miles east of Oak Brook, Ill. The heart of the medical center campus, Loyola University Hospital, is a 561-licensed-bed facility. It houses a Level I Trauma Center, a Burn Center and the Ronald McDonald® Children's Hospital of Loyola University Medical Center. Also on campus are the Cardinal Bernardin Cancer Center, Loyola Outpatient Center, Center for Heart & Vascular Medicine and Loyola Oral Health Center as well as the LUC Stritch School of Medicine, the LUC Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing and the Loyola Center for Fitness. Loyola's Gottlieb Memorial Hospital campus in Melrose Park includes the 264-bed community hospital, the Gottlieb Center for Fitness and the Marjorie G. Weinberg Cancer Care Center.*

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