

PATERSON, **NJ [November 29, 2010]** – St. Joseph's Healthcare System (SJHS) has announced Mark W. Connolly, MD, as the Chairman of Surgical Services at St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center (SJRMC). A world-renowned heart surgeon and highly respected physician-leader, Dr. Connolly will take the reins of St. Joseph's Surgical Department effective December, 2010.

"We are pleased to welcome Mark Connolly to the St. Joseph's Healthcare System family," said William A. McDonald, President and Chief Executive Officer at SJHS. "Dr. Connolly brings tremendous expertise and experience as a skilled leader and as a pioneering cardiothoracic surgeon with excellent outcomes. His clinical excellence and leadership will ensure continued progress in the delivery of world-class surgical practices here at St. Joseph's," added Mr. McDonald.

Board-certified by the American Board of Surgery and the American Board of Thoracic Surgery, Dr. Connolly is widely recognized for his innovative and successful surgical interventions, especially in high-risk and complex cases. In 2004, he was acknowledged by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services as having one of the lowest risk-adjusted patient mortality rates in the state.

Dr. Connolly has pioneered, and is nationally and internationally recognized, many new procedures, including minimally invasive heart surgery, beating heart coronary artery bypass graft surgery, laser and robotic-assisted revascularization valve repair and replacement, endoscopic radial artery and saphaenous vein harvesting, aortic surgery, and ablation for the treatment of atrial fibrillation.

A dedicated researcher who will bring additional expertise to St. Joseph's academic programs, Dr. Connolly is an editorial manuscript reviewer and educational program developer. He has authored and co-authored nearly 100 scientific papers, peer-reviewed publications, and book chapters. Dr. Connolly is a sought-after international and national lecturer who has been featured in more than 100 presentations, panel discussions, telemedicine/telesurgery and webcasts.

A member of numerous medical and surgical organizations, including the NJ Society of Thoracic Surgeons, the Medical Society of NJ, the International Society of Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery, and the American College of Cardiology, Society of Thoracic Surgeons, American College of Physicians, Dr. Connolly serves on many national and state committees, advisory boards and editorial review committees.

A California native and graduate of the University of California, Davis, Dr. Connolly earned his medical degree at Northwestern University, Chicago, with residencies at New York University - Bellevue Medical Center, NYC, Emory University, Atlanta, and a Surgical Research Fellowship at Maimonides Medical Center, Brooklyn, NY.
He was the first doctor to be honored as the "Physician of the Year" in 2006 by the American Heart Association, Northern New Jersey Chapter, for his efforts as a champion for innovative practice and quality outcomes.
Prior to his appointment at St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center, Dr. Connolly served as the Director of the Department of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery and Co-Director of the Cathedral Heart and Vascular Institute at St. Michael's Medical Center in Newark, NJ, a member of Catholic Health East.
Dr. Connolly has also served as Acting Director, Department of Surgery, St. Michael's Medical Center, Newark, NJ; Chief, Section of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery, Lenox Hill Hospital, NYC; and Director, Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Maimonides Medical Center, Brooklyn, NY.