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## **For Immediate Release**

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### **John Kutch Named New CEO at Grand Itasca**

**Grand Rapids** – John Kutch has been named the new Chief Executive Officer at Grand Itasca Clinic and Hospital. Mr. Kutch, the current Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President at Willis-Knighton Health System in Shreveport, Louisiana, will begin his new role as the CEO at Grand Itasca on December 1, 2007. Kutch will replace Dan McCormick, current CEO, who announced his resignation in May of this year.

Kutch, an experienced health care executive, has a diverse background in physician relations, health system operations, and leadership. His current position at Willis-Knighton has Kutch overseeing the day-to-day operations of 4 hospitals and a 35+ clinic system that serves patients in Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas. He joined Willis-Knighton in 2001 and acted as the Vice President of Revenue Cycle Operations and Management prior to assuming his current position of Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President in 2005.

John graduated from the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks with a Bachelor's of Business Administration and Financial Management. He completed his Master of Health Services Administration at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio.

"The Grand Itasca Board is very pleased with the outcome of the search process", said Barbara McDonald, Grand Itasca Board Chair. "We are very excited to have John join Grand Itasca as the next CEO. McDonald continued, "John brings a particular passion for patient-centered health care, and high energy to accomplish his goals. He possesses strong leadership experience in working with innovative, integrated health care systems. We were particularly impressed with John's excellent communication and relationship-building attributes, and his desire for creating high quality, results-orientated medical services. John will make a great addition to our community and we look forward to welcoming his family to Grand Rapids in the near future."

Prior to his position in Shreveport, John was the CEO of Heartland Independent Provider Network, Inc., a Physician Hospital Organization, in Fargo, North Dakota. He also served as the CEO of Mobridge Regional Hospital in Mobridge, South Dakota.

Although Kutch is coming to Grand Itasca from a much larger organization he believes there are a lot of similarities in the two organizations. "Both organizations have a passion for and the pursuit of high-quality clinical outcomes, customer service, patient safety initiatives, physician and allied health professional recruitment, and growth. All while meeting an acceptable threshold for cost and profitability" said Kutch. "Grand

Itasca is focused, aligned, and passionate about making a difference in the way care is delivered in Grand Rapids and the surrounding communities.” He continued, “The new clinic and hospital built with the patient experience in mind and an emphasis on innovation were also big attractions for us. These are important because innovation, particularly in the diagnosis and treatment of human disease, is the hallmark of American health care.”

When asked what his first priorities at Grand Itasca would be, John stated, “I want to be a visible resource for the clinic and hospital staff. I view my role as providing leadership, support, and guidance to staff and ensuring that staff have what they need to provide excellent patient care.” John said, “Other top priorities include listening. Listening to physicians, hospital staff, and community stakeholders in order to seek their perspective on where the hospital is and gain insight on what the critical success factors are for the Grand Itasca care system going forward.”

Although John and his family have been in Shreveport for the past six years, he and his wife, Nicole, still consider the Midwest home. John grew up in Minnesota and his wife Nicole is from Minot, North Dakota. “We really like the community, its size and its schools. Minnesota is a national leader in education and it is important that we are located in a community that has a good school system. We wanted to raise our children in a community and environment similar to the one’s we grew up in. Grand Rapids is an excellent choice,” John commented. “There are a lot of attractions about Grand Rapids – lots’ of exciting community investments including a new clinic and hospital, a community college, and a lot of other new businesses.”

John and Nicole have two children, Will, seven, and Grace, four. Both John and Nicole are involved in their children’s activities including soccer, swimming, football, hockey, boy scouts and a running club. “This is very valuable time,” says Kutch. “One of our goals as parents is to expose our kids to as much as possible. Nicole and I want our children to understand what it means to be part of a community and to be involved in that community. Community involvement is a wonderful thing for two important reasons: 1) You have an opportunity to improve your community by supporting local businesses and/or schools; and 2) what a great way to make a difference and make new friends.”

Grand Itasca Clinic and Hospital is a non-profit, integrated delivery system that employs nearly 600 people. The integrated clinic and hospital, described as a “modern expression of hospitality and healing” is home to over 40 physicians and other providers including specialists in Orthopedics, Ob/Gyn, Pediatrics, Urology, and Acute Rehabilitation.