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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Children's HeartLink to Collaborate with Lucile Packard Children's Hospital on Medical Mission and Parent Education Effort in India

Nurses at Innova Children's Heart Hospital in Hyderabad, India, will be trained on new materials for parent education and care

Minneapolis, Minn. (May 24, 2010) -- On June 5, 2010, Children's HeartLink will send a team of volunteers from Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford University on a seven-day medical mission to Hyderabad, India to perform lifesaving heart operations correcting congenital heart defects in children. The team of volunteer physicians, nurses and technicians, led by Mohan Reddy, M.D., will also provide training to local cardiac medical staff and provide patient screening and treatment.

This will be Children's HeartLink's second full-team cardiac medical mission to Innova Children's Heart Hospital. A key objective of this mission is to pilot the Parent Education/Discharge Instructions (PEDI) project by training personnel at Innova in effective ways of providing practical information about follow-up care to family caregivers of pediatric heart patients.

The PEDI project was developed by a group of Children's HeartLink volunteers who realized that in many developing countries, parents do not have the opportunity to be as involved in their child's care as they do in the developed world. The program is designed to help children receive the best possible care by better integrating their parents into the treatment process. The project tools include educational booklets and videos on preparing for a hospital stay and post-hospital care. Ultimately, Children's HeartLink hopes to implement the PEDI program in many of its partner hospital locations in China, Malaysia, Vietnam, Ukraine, Africa, and Brazil, as well as India.

"By leveraging and mobilizing the strengths of a broad, diverse network of contributors – many of whom have yet to meet each other in person – we have created something unique and valuable. The PEDI project will help children with heart disease receive the full range of care they need in order to lead healthy lives after their operations," said Elizabeth Perlich Sweeney, president of Children's HeartLink.

During this mission the team will also:

1. Work with the Innova team to identify their pediatric cardiac program's specific needs and what assistance is required from Children's HeartLink volunteers.
2. Use teaching, case review and treatment to improve cardiac care diagnostic and technical skills.

3. Offer observations and recommendations on Innova's current pediatric cardiac services and plan for future collaboration opportunities to advance pediatric cardiac services.
4. Support Innova in its efforts to reach out to the broader South Indian community to provide children with cardiovascular screening services and to provide primary care providers, cardiologists and nurses with continuing education in early detection, screening and post-operative care.

About Children's HeartLink

Founded in 1969, Children's HeartLink is a medical non-governmental organization working in partnership with health care centers in underserved regions of the world to promote sustainable cardiac care for children with congenital or acquired heart disease. Children's HeartLink partners with health care providers in medically underserved areas, empowering local hospitals to care for children in their region with consistent, quality and sustainable pediatric cardiac services.

See www.childrensheartlink.org for more information.

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