

Wellmont Health System and HealthSouth Corporation Announce Partnership to Operate Rehabilitation Hospitals in Tennessee and Virginia

PRNewswire-FirstCall

KINGSPORT, Tenn. and BIRMINGHAM, Ala.

Wellmont Health System and HealthSouth Corporation today announced a partnership to own and operate comprehensive inpatient rehabilitation hospitals in Kingsport, Tenn., and Bristol, Va.

The new partnership, Wellmont/HealthSouth IRF, LLC, will own and operate HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital, an existing 50-bed inpatient rehabilitation hospital, located at 113 Cassell Dr., in Kingsport. In addition, HealthSouth will seek a certificate of public need ("COPN") from the Virginia Department of Health to build a 25-bed inpatient rehabilitation hospital in Bristol, Va. The new hospital also will be owned and operated by the partnership, which will be finalized upon approval of the COPN.

"HealthSouth is the nation's premier provider of inpatient rehabilitative services," said Dr. Richard Salluzzo, Wellmont's president and chief executive officer. "With this partnership, residents of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia will have access to a seamless continuum of care that includes the full range of acute and tertiary services delivered by our hospitals and the focused rehabilitative care that can only be found in a comprehensive inpatient setting."

Inpatient rehabilitation hospitals offer a higher level of rehabilitative care to patients who are recovering from stroke and other neurological disorders, brain and spinal cord injury, amputations, orthopedic, cardiac and pulmonary conditions. Patients benefit from a comprehensive regimen and high level of care that includes significant physician involvement and increased therapy time.

"We are pleased to partner with the well-respected Wellmont Health System," said HealthSouth Inpatient Division President Mark Tarr. "Through this partnership, we will continue to provide the quality inpatient rehabilitation services the Kingsport community has come to expect from HealthSouth and we look forward to serving the Bristol area in the near future."

The rehabilitation hospital will be of particular benefit to patients served by Bristol Regional Medical Center's primary stroke center, the region's first Joint Commission-certified primary stroke center. Bristol Regional serves as the hub of the Appalachian Regional Stroke Center Network, providing advanced stroke care for patients referred from community hospitals across Southwest Virginia. The Bristol hospital is expected to open in early 2008, pending COPN approval.

With the HealthSouth partnership, Wellmont Health System will operate 11 hospitals across Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia. Wellmont facilities will include Holston Valley Medical Center and the Holston Valley Regional Children's Hospital and Center in Kingsport, Tenn.; Bristol Regional Medical Center in Bristol, Tenn.; Wellmont Ridgeview in Bristol, Va.; Hawkins County Memorial Hospital in Rogersville, Tenn.; Takoma Regional Hospital in Greeneville, Tenn.; Hancock County Hospital in Sneedville, Tenn.; and Lonesome Pine Hospital in Big Stone Gap, Va., as well as partnerships with Select Specialty Hospital in Bristol, Tenn., HealthSouth in Bristol, Va., and HealthSouth in Kingsport, Tenn.

About HealthSouth

HealthSouth strives to be the healthcare company of choice for its patients, employees, physicians and shareholders. Operating across the country, HealthSouth is one of the nation's largest providers of healthcare services with a focus on the inpatient rehabilitation industry. HealthSouth can be found on the Web at <http://www.healthsouth.com/>.

Contacts: Amy Stevens, Wellmont
423-230-8235
Andy Brimmer, HealthSouth
205-410-2777

First Call Analyst:
FCMN Contact:

SOURCE: HealthSouth Corporation

CONTACT: Amy Stevens of Wellmont, +1-423-230-8235, or Andy Brimmer of HealthSouth, +1-205-410-2777

Web site: <http://www.healthsouth.com/>

<http://healthsouth.mediaroom.com/2007-04-17-Wellmont-Health-System-and-HealthSouth-Corporation-Announce-Partnership-to-Operate-Rehabilitation-Hospitals-in-Tennessee-and-Virginia>