Dr. Niloo M. Edwards, Cardiovascular Surgeon, Named Chief of Cardiac and Vascular Services at St. Peter’s Hospital

ALBANY, NY – July 8, 2011 – St. Peter’s Health Care Services has named Niloo M. Edwards, M.D., to the new position of chief of Cardiac and Vascular Services at St. Peter’s Hospital. Dr. Edwards, who began his surgical career at St. Peter’s, was the chairman of Cardiothoracic Surgery at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health.

In his new position, Dr. Edwards will oversee a comprehensive process to further enhance and expand the scope of St. Peter’s nationally renowned program to prevent and treat cardiac and vascular disease in northeastern New York state. Dr. Edwards began his new position at St. Peter’s on July 1.

During Dr. Edwards’ tenure as professor of Surgery and chairman of Cardiothoracic Surgery, the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health became home to one of the nation’s most highly recognized academic cardiovascular surgery programs. He is an expert in the treatment of patients with advanced or end-stage heart disease. Dr. Edwards is also an authority in the development of programs to address the special needs of elderly cardiac patients.

Board-certified in Surgery and Thoracic Surgery, Dr. Edwards has specialized in the surgical treatment of end-stage heart disease including transplantation, coronary artery bypass surgery, heart valve repair and replacement, minimally invasive heart surgery, open heart surgery for the geriatric patient, implantation of left ventricular assist devices (LVADs), mitral valve repair, and atrial fibrillation surgery.
A passionate patient advocate, Dr. Edwards has won numerous awards, including a “Best Doctors in America” award for four years since 2005; “One of America’s Top Surgeons” by Consumers Research Council of America four times; and many other honors by cardiac and organ donation groups.

Dr. Edwards has also held numerous national leadership positions in organizations influencing standards and direction in the field of cardiothoracic surgery including the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) and the Society of Thoracic Surgeons.

“Dr. Edwards is that extremely rare combination of a gifted surgeon, an inspiring teacher, experienced administrator, accomplished researcher and committed public health advocate,” said Steven P. Boyle, president, CEO of St. Peter’s Health Care Services.

“At St. Peter’s we have made significant investment in the latest technologies and facilities to provide our region with the best cardiac and vascular care for years to come,” Boyle said. “Dr. Edwards will lead St. Peter’s award-winning cardiovascular care program into a new era of more specialized patient care with these cutting-edge facilities and technology.”

As the first physician chief of Cardiac and Vascular Services, Dr. Edwards will provide professional oversight and coordination for the St. Peter’s departments of cardiology, cardiac surgery and vascular surgery. Dr. Edwards will work with the chiefs of these departments: Michael Martinelli, M.D., chief of Cardiology; Javid Saifi, chief of Cardiac Surgery; and Philip Paty, chief of Vascular Surgery; to further develop St. Peter’s cardiovascular program, and to ensure that patients with heart and circulatory disease receive the most comprehensive care with specialists and staff from multiple disciplines.

Dr. Edwards views his new appointment in Albany, New York, as a homecoming. A native of Sri Lanka, Dr. Edwards was educated at Columbia University in New York City, and then graduated from the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. He did his surgical residency at the University of Rochester’s Strong Memorial Hospital. He also completed two research fellowships and his cardiothoracic training fellowship at Columbia University.

He began his cardiac surgery practice at St. Peter’s Hospital in 1996. He then returned to Columbia University where he served as vice chairman of the Department of Surgery Operations and Quality; director of Geriatric Cardiac Surgery; and director of Cardiac Transplantation – all at New York Presbyterian Hospital of Columbia University. In 2003, he moved to Wisconsin as chairman of Cardiothoracic Surgery.

“I am eager to begin my work to bring a new dimension in high-quality patient care to St. Peter’s renowned cardiovascular program for the Capital Region,” Dr. Edwards said. “My wife and I have family who live in New York. We view the Capital Region and this community as our home. As
this region grows as a center for the development of high-tech solutions to today’s greatest challenges in science and medicine, I look forward to working with my colleagues and the entire community to lead a coordinated attack on cardiovascular disease and stroke.”

In addition to serving as chief of Cardiac and Vascular Services, Dr. Edwards will be a key member of the institution’s cardiac surgery team. Other members of St. Peter’s cardiac surgery team include Chief of Cardiac Surgery Javid Saiñ, M.D., and Thomas Canavan, M.D. A fourth cardiovascular surgeon, Christopher Terrien, M.D, will join the cardiac surgery team in August. Dr. Edwards will also be a member of the private cardiovascular surgery practice, Albany Cardiothoracic Surgeons (ACTS).

Dr. Edwards is interested in expanding St. Peter’s cardiovascular programs for heart failure, including advancing the use of cardiac assist devices to help heart patients with advanced or end-stage cardiac disease; aortic replacement; minimally invasive heart valve replacement; and women’s cardiovascular health. St. Peter’s upcoming merger with Northeast Health and Seton Health will mean that patients can access the new cardiac and vascular programs at 125 locations throughout the Capital Region.

Dr. Edwards is a Diplomate of the American Board of Thoracic Surgery and the American Board of Surgery; he is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and the American College of Chest Surgeons. He is certified in Laser Surgery and the da Vinci robotic surgery system.

He held teaching positions at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center and the University of Wisconsin. In addition, he has participated in 15 grant-financed research projects, made 105 international, national and regional presentations, written or co-authored 120 journal articles, nine book chapters, and 57 abstracts and proceedings.

Dr. Edwards resides in Guilderland with his wife, Maureen. They have three children, in their teens and early 20s. He is a licensed pilot and an avid motorcyclist. He has also undertaken annual Heart-to-Heart missions to provide services in developing nations, such as the Dominican Republic.

St. Peter’s Hospital has been designated as a Top 100 Cardiovascular Hospital for ten of the last 12 years. St. Peter's is the only hospital in New York state and the northeastern United States to earn this honor for 10 years, and one of only five hospitals nationwide to receive the distinction 10 or more years. The Cardiac & Vascular Center has also been named a Blue Distinction Center for Cardiac Care because of its consistent commitment to quality care, resulting in better overall outcomes for cardiac patients.

St. Peter's has been named Best Hospital in the Capital Region five years in a row, according to reader surveys by the Times Union newspaper; and Most-Preferred Hospital in the Tech Valley region, according to Scarborough Research.
St. Peter’s facilities are among the nation’s most advanced clinical environments for care of patients with complex heart and vascular disease. A new $2.4 million Hybrid Operating Room, a high-tech catheterization lab within a sterile operating environment, is just one of 29 such installations worldwide.

Cardiovascular surgical facilities include eight new, large operating rooms. It also has a new Cardiac and Vascular Intensive Care Unit (CVICU) and Progressive Care Unit (PCU). Most new patient care rooms are private, with more convenient, quiet waiting rooms for family and visitors. The Progressive Care Unit has “acuity adaptable” rooms to change services along with the patient’s condition, instead of transferring patients between rooms.

St. Peter’s Health Care Services (SPHCS) of Albany, New York, was established by the Religious Sisters of Mercy in 1985 with components that date back to 1869. Led by St. Peter’s Hospital, a 442-bed acute care facility, the SPHCS system also includes: St. Peter’s Hospital Foundation; St. Peter’s Addiction Recovery Center (SPARC), a 40-bed addiction services center; Our Lady of Mercy Life Center, a 160-bed residential care facility; St. Peter’s Nursing & Rehabilitation Center, a 160-bed skilled nursing facility; Mercy Cares For Kids, a child day care center; The Community Hospice, serving patients in residential facilities, hospitals and at home in six counties; and St. Peter’s Auxiliary, Inc.

With 4,500 employees throughout the system and a budget of nearly $500 million, St. Peter’s Health Care Services is the region’s third-largest employer. In recent years, St. Peter’s Hospital has earned several top national and state honors for its overall care, cardiovascular care, patient safety and nursing services.

Later this year, St. Peter’s Health Care Services will merge with two other regional health systems – Northeast Health and Seton Health – both based in Troy, NY. With nearly 12,000 employees in more than 125 locations, the three systems currently provide a wide array of services to thousands of people each day. These services include: St. Peter’s Hospital’s state-of-the-art tertiary care services, its Community Hospice, home care, addiction recovery center, and two skilled nursing facilities; and Northeast’s Albany Memorial and Samaritan hospitals, and Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital. It also includes The Eddy’s renowned eldercare services including skilled nursing, Alzheimer’s, adult day services, home care and community services, and retirement and assisted living. Seton adds St. Mary’s Hospital, a skilled nursing facility, 14 physician office locations and an array of specialty services.

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