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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Firelands Regional Medical Center Receives Number One Ranking in Ohio in Overall Orthopedics**

Firelands Regional Medical Center in Top 5% in the Nation

(March 14, 2011 - Sandusky, Ohio) – HealthGrades, the leading independent healthcare ratings organization, recently published a national study finding that Firelands Regional Medical Center is ranked number one in the State of Ohio and among the top 5% in the nation in overall orthopedics, including spinal surgery. Ratings included all hospitals in the nation (nearly 5,000) and examined mortality rates and complication rates from government quality data reported in 2007, 2008 and 2009.

“Firelands Regional Medical Center recognizes that healthcare consumers are becoming more interested in and educated about quality outcomes,” says Patty Martin, Vice President of Quality & Patient Satisfaction at Firelands Regional Medical Center. “Firelands embraces all efforts to ensure the highest quality of services are available to the community, including being ranked #1 in Ohio for Overall Orthopedics.” Specifically, Firelands Regional Medical Center received the following HealthGrades 2011 orthopedic ratings, rankings, and awards:

- Ranked #1 in Ohio for Overall Orthopedics in 2011
- Ranked in the Top 5% in the Nation for Overall Orthopedics
- Five-Star Rated (Top Rating) for Spine Surgery
- Five-Star Rated (Top Rating) for Hip Fracture Repair
- Five-Star Rated (Top Rating) for Total Hip Replacement

- Five-Star Rated (Top Rating) for Total Knee Replacement
- Joint Replacement Excellence Award, 2011
- Orthopedic Surgery Excellence Award, 2011

Firelands Regional Medical Center, together with the orthopedic surgeons and neurosurgeons of Sandusky Orthopedics & Rheumatology, NOMS Orthopaedic Surgery, NOMS Access Orthopaedics, and Erie Neurosurgery & Associates, ranked higher than any other hospital in the State of Ohio for overall orthopedic surgeries, including back and neck surgeries, as well as knee and hip procedures.

“What this means to the patients of Firelands and the patients of these surgeons is that the care they receive is performed by some of the nation’s best orthopedic surgeons and neurosurgeons at the top-rated hospital in the state of Ohio,” shares Chuck Stark, President & CEO of Firelands Regional Medical Center. “The ranking is important to the community because it is based on quality measures and surgical results, including mortality and complication rates. When you have access to one of the top orthopedic and neurosurgery programs in the nation – right here in Sandusky – why choose to go anywhere else?”

“This award demonstrates the team effort of the orthopedic surgeons and neurosurgeons. In addition, we greatly appreciate all of the therapists, nurses and surgical technicians, who provide leading edge care to our patients every day,” noted James R. Berry, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon. “It’s all about the patient – providing the highest quality care to them, and making sure outcomes are the best they can possibly be; this is our ongoing goal.”

Firelands Regional Medical Center’s ranking is based on the *Thirteenth Annual HealthGrades Hospital Quality in America* study, the largest annual report of its kind, analyzed patient outcomes from nearly 40 million Medicare hospitalization records over a three-year period.

HealthGrades' hospital ratings are the leading objective, actionable quality measures based solely on clinical performance, and are available to the general public by visiting www.healthgrades.com.

HealthGrades rankings are significant for patients to consider because top-performing hospitals (as ranked by HealthGrades) have dramatically lower mortality rates than other hospitals, according to the study. For the 17 procedures and diagnoses for which HealthGrades analyzed mortality rates, patients at top hospitals had a 72% lower chance of dying when compared with the lowest-performing hospitals, and a 53% lower chance of dying when compared to the U.S. national average.

HealthGrades Hospital Quality Ratings

HealthGrades rates hospitals independently based on data that hospitals submit to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. No hospital can opt in or out of being rated, and no hospital pays to be rated.

For 26 procedures and medical treatments, HealthGrades issues star ratings that reflect the mortality and complication rates for each category of care. Hospitals receiving a 5-star rating have mortality or complication rates that are below the national average, to a statistically significant degree. A 3-star rating means the hospital performs as expected. One-star ratings indicate the hospital's mortality or complication rates in that procedure or treatment are statistically higher than average. Because the risk profiles of patient populations at hospitals are not alike, HealthGrades risk-adjusts the data to allow for equal comparisons.

More information on today's HealthGrades study, including the complete methodology, can be found at www.healthgrades.com.

About Firelands Regional Medical Center

Firelands Regional Medical Center is nationally recognized for its award-winning care. As a 400-bed facility, Firelands is ranked number one in the State of Ohio and in the Top 5% nationally for Vascular Surgery and Overall Orthopedics; Top 10% Nationally in Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation, a Thomson Top 100 Hospital for its Cardiovascular Services, and ranked in the Top 5% nationally for Patient Safety. Firelands Regional Medical Center is the area's only Accredited Chest Pain Center, is a Certified Primary Stroke Center, is the area's only Breast Imaging Center of Excellence. Serving a five-county region, Firelands provides many advanced care services to the region including comprehensive cancer care, full-time interventional cardiac care and open heart surgery, wound care services including hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT), acute inpatient rehabilitation, as well as many advanced surgical procedures. For more information about Firelands, visit our website at firelands.com or visit us on Facebook at facebook.com/FirelandsRegionalMedicalCenter.

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