



## For Immediate Release

Contact: Sam Caruso, Jr.  
[carusos@smhplus.org](mailto:carusos@smhplus.org)  
985-649-8834

Karen Hales  
[halesk@smhplus.org](mailto:halesk@smhplus.org)  
985-649-8616

### **SMH Implements Tobacco-Free Campus Policy** *Campus-wide initiative instituted on WHO World No Tobacco Day, May 31*

LIDELL, La.—(May 10, 2010)—Six months after instituting a tobacco-free policy for its employees, volunteers and contracted employees, Slidell Memorial Hospital will become a tobacco-free campus on May 31, WHO World No Tobacco Day. After this time, no tobacco use of any kind will be permitted — inside or outside — on hospital property. This initiative will include the elimination of designated areas outside SMH, where patients and visitors are currently permitted to use tobacco products.

The policy was developed and approved by the hospital's Board of Commissioners in collaboration with the medical staff.

“As a healthcare organization, committed to the health and safety of our patients, we have a responsibility to treat the whole patient, both mentally and physically. Allowing patients to use tobacco products while in our care defeats this purpose,” said Bob Hawley, SMH Chief Executive Officer. “We believe that we have a responsibility to be leaders in advocating for a healthy lifestyle. Establishing our entire campus as tobacco-free firmly supports that belief.”

Last November, SMH instituted a tobacco-free policy that extended to its employees, volunteers, students, and contracted employees anywhere on the campus or on any sites operated by SMH, including smoking in personal vehicles on the property, as well as on any sidewalks or streets within the boundaries of the campus. The extension of the policy to all patients and visitors of the hospital is a concrete way to demonstrate the hospital's ongoing commitment to healthy living.

Since smoking remains the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, Slidell Memorial is extending its longstanding no-smoking policy to include all indoor and outdoor spaces. The Surgeon General claims that the risk of developing heart disease increases by 25–30 percent and lung cancer by 20–30 percent when nonsmokers are exposed to second-hand smoke at home or at work.

#### **ABOUT SMH**

Slidell Memorial Hospital is a full-service 182-bed acute care not-for-profit community hospital located at 1001 Gause Blvd., in the heart of Slidell. Founded in 1959, SMH is the third-largest employer in St. Tammany Parish, employing 1,100 full, part-time and pool employees. SMH serves as a primary healthcare resource for families in St. Tammany Parish, La.; Pearl River County, Miss.; and the greater Mississippi Gulf Coast region. It is located online at <http://www.slidellmemorial.org>.