TULSA, OK—The Children's Hospital at Saint Francis will open the nation's eighth St. Jude Affiliate Clinic in July 2016. This affiliation is the first of its kind in Oklahoma and will bring the experience and expertise of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital to the children and families of Oklahoma and the surrounding areas.

The St. Jude Affiliate Program began in 1972 in Peoria, Illinois making it possible to bring the cutting-edge science and treatment developed at St. Jude to the patients and families across the country without having to travel to Memphis for their ongoing care. The St. Jude Affiliate Clinic at The Children’s Hospital at Saint Francis physicians and staff will work closely with their peers at St. Jude to bring life-saving treatments and clinical trials to children with cancer through the clinic located within The Children’s Hospital at Saint Francis.

“Our Affiliate Program is meant to provide world-class care for children with cancer and other life-threatening diseases in a broad region of the United States, “said Dr. Larry Kun, St. Jude clinical director.

Shannon Filosa, executive director of The Children’s Hospital at Saint Francis said, “One of the goals of The Children’s Hospital at Saint Francis is to provide the children and families of this region the ability to seek high-quality pediatric care close to home. Saint Francis has offered excellent pediatric hematology and oncology services since 1987. This new affiliation with St. Jude will connect our hospital and physicians to the world leader in pediatric cancer care and give our patients access to some of the best treatment, trials and support available.”

“This is not an “in name only” relationship—this is true collaboration in every sense of the word. The treatment and resources available to the patients of the St. Jude Affiliate Clinic here in Tulsa will be as if they were at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis,” said Greg Kirkpatrick, M.D., pediatric hematologist and oncologist with The St. Jude Affiliate Clinic at The Children’s Hospital at Saint Francis.
“For years, the talented physicians at The Children’s Hospital at Saint Francis have referred patients to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis for enrollment in our clinical research trials,” says Dr. Carolyn Russo, medical director of St. Jude Affiliate Clinics. “Now, as a St. Jude Affiliate Clinic, Saint Francis will receive support to broaden the scope of this collaboration and allow these kids to stay closer to home for much of their care and under the supervision of their own physicians.”

**About Saint Francis Health System**

Saint Francis is a Catholic, not-for-profit health system wholly owned and operated in Tulsa, Oklahoma whose mission is to extend the presence and healing ministry of Christ to all who seek its services. The health system is anchored by Saint Francis Hospital, a 962-bed tertiary center, which includes a 162-bed Children’s Hospital with the region’s only level IV neonatal intensive care unit, a 168-bed heart hospital and Tulsa’s leading trauma and emergency center. Also part of the health system is Saint Francis Hospital South, a 96-bed community hospital and Laureate Psychiatric Clinic and Hospital—a 75-bed private, psychiatric facility recognized nationally for its eating disorders program. Additionally, Saint Francis employs 315 physicians through the Warren Clinic, which serves the region with over 70 locations throughout eastern Oklahoma. To punctuate Saint Francis’ commitment to integrated healthcare delivery, it also operates a home care division, which includes hospice, home health and durable medical equipment companies. In total, the organization has more than 8,200 employees, 1,000 physicians and 700 volunteers, making it the largest private employer in Tulsa County.

**About St. Jude Affiliate Program**

The St. Jude Affiliate Program makes treatments developed as clinical trials at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital available to more children by offering much of the care close to home. The St. Jude Affiliate Program is a network of pediatric hematology-oncology clinics, hospitals, and in some cases, universities united to extend the mission of St. Jude. The physicians and staff at these sites work in collaboration with the staff of St. Jude to deliver state-of-the-art care and innovative clinical trials to children with cancer and blood disorders.