

Helmsley Charitable Trust grants \$186,784 to help CHI St. Francis Health purchase state-of-the-art ultrasound equipment

Breckenridge, MN — The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust has granted \$186,784 to CHI St. Francis Health to purchase Philips Epiq Elite Ultrasound Machine as part of a \$26.4 million ultrasound initiative in Minnesota. The initiative includes nearly \$18.3 million to help Minnesota hospitals and health centers purchase ultrasound imaging devices and an additional \$8.1 million to boost sonography and point of care ultrasound (POCUS) training opportunities across the state.

We at CHI St. Francis Health are excited to continue to offer to our community - general ultrasound, vascular ultrasound and echocardiography with this new state-of-the-art ultrasound equipment. In rural health settings access to imaging equipment can be limited for both patients and clinicians, causing unnecessary travel time and stress on the patient. This limited access can also push an increase in wait times for imaging services. By having the necessary equipment available at St. Francis Health we can make it easier for a patient to stay in the area and get the same services that they would get elsewhere. The patient is also able to work with their current care provider and have all information managed at their local clinic or hospital.

Ultrasound uses high-frequency sound waves to produce images of structures inside the body. This safe, cost-effective tool supports other clinical information to help providers make timely diagnoses and provide appropriate treatment.

Walter Panzirer, a Trustee for the Helmsley Charitable Trust, said the grants will help improve access to exceptional medical treatment for all Minnesotans, whether they live in the heart of Minneapolis or a smaller rural or underserved community.

“Our hospitals and health centers need to stay current with rapidly advancing technology so they can continue to provide top-notch healthcare close to home,” Panzirer said. “These grants help ensure that facilities across Minnesota have the latest and greatest ultrasound equipment and training.”

The grants were announced Tuesday during a news conference at Hennepin Healthcare in Minneapolis.

More than half of the 196 devices purchased through the grants (109) are POCUS machines, which are used by providers at the bed or bedside for immediate assessment of a patient to

quickly determine a course of action. The grants will also provide 69 general ultrasound systems and 18 cardiovascular ultrasound systems, which aid in imaging of the heart.

The initiative also includes more than \$8.1 million to train new sonographers, offer continuing education to sonographers and ultrasound technologists, and provide comprehensive POCUS training to doctors, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners. The training grants include more than \$917,000 to the Minnesota Rural Health Association to support sonographer training in rural and underserved areas of the state, more than \$1 million to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities to expand St. Cloud Technical & Community College's sonography program, and nearly \$6.2 million to the Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians Foundation which will partner with High Quality Medical Education (HQMEDED) to provide POCUS training across the state.

"These grants are a game changer for rural hospitals across the state," said Thomas Pahl, PA-C, an emergency department clinician, instructor with HQMEDED, and member of the Minnesota State Trauma Advisory Council. "Clinicians and sonographers will not only have access to the newest ultrasound equipment on the market, but they will also be able to pursue educational opportunities to become more proficient at use of the equipment, expand the studies they can perform, and incorporate these skills into their clinical practices."

About the Helmsley Charitable Trust

The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust aspires to improve lives by supporting exceptional efforts in the U.S. and around the world in health and select place-based initiatives. Since beginning active grantmaking in 2008, Helmsley has committed more than \$3.5 billion for a wide range of charitable purposes. Helmsley's Rural Healthcare Program funds innovative projects that use information technologies to connect rural patients to emergency medical care, bring the latest medical therapies to patients in remote areas, and provide state-of-the-art training for rural hospitals and EMS personnel. To date, this program has awarded more than \$600 million to organizations and initiatives in the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, Minnesota, Iowa, Montana, and Nevada. For more information, visit www.helmsleytrust.org.