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Warner Thomas to succeed Patrick Quinlan as CEO of Ochsner Health System

Quinlan will head new Ochsner Center for Community Wellness and Health Policy

NEW ORLEANS (May 14, 2012)-- Ochsner Health System announced today that its president and chief operating officer, Warner Thomas, will succeed Dr. Patrick Quinlan as the system's chief executive officer, effective September 1, 2012. Quinlan, who has led Ochsner Health System since 2001, will head the new Ochsner Center for Community Wellness and Health Policy, and will continue to be on the Ochsner Health System Board of Directors.

"The Board carefully developed this succession plan over the past eighteen months, in partnership with Dr. Quinlan and Mr. Thomas," Jimmy Maurin, board chair, Ochsner Health System, said. "The Ochsner leadership transition will benefit the Greater Gulf South communities that Ochsner serves because it leverages each leader's skills and passions: visionary operational management and a continued emphasis on the technology and infrastructure required to maintain clinical quality from Warner Thomas as incoming CEO, and community wellness leadership and advocacy on a national level driven by the expertise and personal commitment of Dr. Patrick Quinlan."

"The practice of medicine remains at the core of Ochsner - it is the key to our past and future success. I will continue my work with the Ochsner medical group and medical leadership to enhance the quality and scope of medicine at Ochsner. In addition, partnerships are an important aspect in the future growth of Ochsner. I will devote considerable time and effort to foster these growing partnerships in this country and abroad," Quinlan said.

Quinlan, a longtime advocate for public health issues, sees a great need for the new Center for Community Wellness and Health Policy. "For the first time, a major health system will take on the important responsibility of serving to educate and inform people and decision makers so that we are addressing health care issues at the root cause of disease instead of simply addressing the symptoms. It's an opportunity to put meaningful resources in place to support tobacco-free living, the elimination of childhood obesity and other issues," Quinlan said.

Since Quinlan arrived at Ochsner in 1999, there have been many accomplishments, but perhaps the most notable being the 2001 unification of the Ochsner Clinic and Ochsner Foundation Hospital. For the 11 years of Quinlan's tenure as CEO of Ochsner Health System, Ochsner Medical Center was

recognized numerous times as one of the Best Hospitals in America by U.S. News & World Report and Thomson Reuters named it one of the nation's 100 Top Hospitals[®] three times. Quinlan was the driving force behind the creation of Ochsner's tobacco-free initiative *Living the Legacy* as well as the creation of the successful program *Change the Kids, Change the Future*[™] designed to inform the preventative health choices of families and children across the community.

As president and chief operating officer, Thomas led Ochsner's effort in building its own hospital system through the acquisition of six hospitals, which led to the Ochsner Health System as it stands today serving people across Louisiana.

"Warner Thomas has been essential in preparing Ochsner to tackle the changes prompted by the Affordable Care Act and the reformation of health insurance," Maurin said. "Warner's management skills have benefited our patients, physicians and employees, all of whom have thrived in our high-functioning environment." His expertise and ability have been noticed nationally, as well. Thomas was named 2012 chair of the American Hospital Association's Section for Healthcare Systems which represents health systems across the country that provide guidance in AHA's policy development and governance.

"In addition, Warner has been committed to recruiting top talent and developing strong leaders throughout the organization. His vision has been realized through the creation of the Ochsner Leadership Institute," Maurin said. "His focus on implementing industry best practices and developing innovative partnerships with major companies such as GE, have resulted in the operating capabilities required to successfully run a health system of this size."

"I'm deeply honored by the Board's faith and confidence in me," Thomas said. "As an integrated system under Dr. Quinlan, we have achieved great success. I hope to build on that success, together with our strong leadership team, to further Ochsner's Mission and Vision of becoming a global leader while maintaining the highest quality healthcare in our community."

For more information, please visit ochsner.org/future.

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Ochsner Health System is southeast Louisiana's largest non-profit, academic, multi-specialty, healthcare delivery system with eight hospitals and over 38 health centers in Louisiana. Ochsner has been named the Consumer Choice for Healthcare in New Orleans for 16 consecutive years and is the only Louisiana hospital recognized by U.S. News and World Report as a "Best Hospital" across seven specialty categories. Ochsner employs more than 13,000 employees, over 850 physicians in over 90 medical specialties and subspecialties and conducts over 300 clinical research trials annually. Ochsner Health System is proud to be a tobacco-free environment. For more information, please visit ochsner.org and follow us on Twitter and Facebook.