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## **Southern California Health Care Leader Richard Afable, MD, to Retire in December**

**Irvine, Calif., August 22, 2017** - Richard Afable, MD, executive vice president of Providence St. Joseph Health Southern California Region – Orange County/High Desert and president and CEO of St. Joseph Hoag Health, has announced he will retire in December 2017. Dr. Afable has led a long and accomplished career in Southern California, where he is well-regarded for both his clinical and leadership achievements.

“Many people call for changes in health care, but few accomplish lasting transformation. Dr. Afable is one of these rare leaders. He has developed a strong regional network in Southern California, focusing on expanded care, greater access, innovative wellness services, and solid partnerships with physicians, employers, community organizations and other health providers,” said Mike Butler, president of operations, Providence St. Joseph Health. “As a life-long advocate of whole-person quality care, he also brought together internal teams to improve clinical outcomes and make significant gains in mental health services.”

Dr. Afable assumed his position at St. Joseph Hoag Health after serving as CEO for Hoag Hospital in Newport Beach, Calif. for eight years and managing an affiliation between St. Joseph Health and Hoag in 2013. At the time, the coming together of two former competitors surprised the region, but Dr. Afable promised that it would be a partnership of the “brightest minds and biggest hearts.” Since then, St. Joseph Hoag Health has firmly established itself as a leader among large employers and community members. The network has earned some of the highest honors for medical care, including Magnet recognition for outstanding nursing at all its Orange County, California hospitals. Drawing upon the strengths of its seven renowned hospitals and large physician network, St. Joseph Hoag Health also achieved superior clinical outcomes, including saving hundreds of lives through breakthrough methods of reducing sepsis complications. Additionally, the network attracted more partners, including Children’s Hospital Orange County (CHOC).

In recognition of his work, Dr. Afable has received many honors. *Modern Healthcare* listed him among the 100 Most Influential People in Healthcare and 50 Most Influential Physicians. Additionally, he has repeatedly been named to *Becker’s Hospital Review’s* lists of Health System Leaders to Know, 100 Leaders of Great Hospitals and 100 Physician Leaders of Hospitals and Health Systems.

In service to the health care field, Dr. Afable is the chair-elect of the California Hospital Association, the largest state hospital association in the country, where he is an influential voice for the needs of those who are most vulnerable –including those impacted by financial hardships or mental health concerns. He is also the immediate past chair of the Hospital Association of Southern California.

Upon leaving his current post, Dr. Afable plans to devote himself to mental health advocacy. He is presently forming a coalition of public and private leaders and organizations that will work together to address the pressing need for expanded mental health services in the Orange County area.

Dr. Afable is working with Mike Butler to develop a transition plan for St. Joseph Hoag Health. Details will be announced later in the year.

**About Providence St. Joseph Health**

Providence St. Joseph Health is committed to improving the health of the communities it serves, especially those who are poor and vulnerable. With 50 hospitals, 829 physician clinics, senior services, supportive housing and many other health and educational services, the health system and its partners employ more than 111,000 caregivers (employees) serving communities across seven states – Alaska, California, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas and Washington. Formed in 2016, the Providence St. Joseph Health family includes the founding organizations, and in: Texas, Covenant Health and Covenant Medical Group; California, Facey Medical Group, Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian and St. Joseph Heritage Healthcare; Washington, Kadlec Regional Medical Center, Pacific Medical Centers and Swedish Health Services.

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