

Immediate Release

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Christiana Care Health System Provides Free Knee Replacement as Part of Operation Walk USA 2017

(WILMINGTON, Del. – Dec. 6, 2017) [Christiana Care Health System](http://www.christianacare.org)'s Department of Orthopaedic Surgery will provide a free knee replacement Thursday, Dec. 7 to a local patient who cannot afford joint replacement surgery as part of Operation Walk USA 2017.

Operation Walk USA 2017 is a collaborative effort between the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and participating hospitals and health systems, including Christiana Care. Through this effort, all aspects of treatment – surgery, hospitalization, and pre-and post-operative care – are provided at no cost to participating patients who cannot afford joint replacement surgery on their own.

"Operation Walk USA is a wonderful way for our orthopaedic surgeons at Christiana Care to give back and help our neighbors achieve optimal health," said Andrew Gelman D.O., an orthopaedic surgeon with Christiana Care and the local physician leader for Operation Walk USA. "This program enables our patients to overcome the disabling arthritis in their knees, and receive the gift of mobility and a brighter future since they can return to employment and an active lifestyle."

As part of Operation Walk USA 2017, Craig Smucker, M.D., an orthopaedic surgeon with Christiana Care, will perform a knee replacement at Christiana Care's Center for Advanced Joint Replacement at Wilmington Hospital, which is among the most advanced and comprehensive programs for hip and knee replacement in the country. The center performs nearly 2,900 total hip and knee replacements annually, using the latest minimally invasive techniques, with clinical outcomes that are among the best in the nation. Annually, Christiana Care performs about 100 orthopaedic surgeries for patients who cannot afford orthopaedic surgery on their own.

"Our Center for Advanced Joint Replacement uses the latest minimally invasive techniques and features clinical outcomes that are among the best in the nation," said Brian Galinat, M.D., MBA, chair of Christiana Care's Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, medical director of Christiana Care's Musculoskeletal Service Line, and board member with the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. "Through Operation Walk USA, our surgeons are able to help more

patients gain access to the comprehensive musculoskeletal care that we offer so they can begin 2018 with a new lease on life.”

Patients seen through Operation Walk USA suffer from arthritic disease, which limits the abilities of 54.4 million Americans and is the most common cause of disability in the United States, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The debilitating pain of end-stage hip or knee degenerative disease often makes working, or completing even the simplest of daily tasks, excruciatingly painful or impossible. Knee and hip replacement surgeries are among the most cost-effective and successful of all orthopaedic procedures.

Operation Walk USA began in 2010 following the tremendous success of Operation Walk, an international volunteer medical service organization that provides treatment for patients with arthritis and joint conditions throughout the world. To date, more than 700 patients have received free total joint replacements through Operation Walk USA. As part of Operation Walk USA 2017, an estimated 60 patients nationwide will undergo free hip and joint replacements from 40 volunteer orthopaedic surgeons across the nation.

For more information about Operation Walk USA 2017, visit www.opwalkusa.com.

About Christiana Care Health System

Christiana Care Health System is one of the country’s largest health care systems, ranking as the 22nd leading hospital in the nation and 11th on the East Coast in terms of admissions. The health system includes The Medical Group of Christiana Care, a network of primary care physicians, medical and surgical specialists as well as home health care, preventive medicine, rehabilitation services and patient/family advisors for core health care services. A not-for-profit teaching hospital affiliated with Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University, Christiana Care is recognized as a regional center for excellence in cardiology, cancer and women's health services. Christiana Care has an extensive range of outpatient services and works closely with its medical staff to achieve better health, better access to care and lower cost. Christiana Care is home to Delaware's only Level I trauma center, the highest capability center and the only one of its kind between Philadelphia and Baltimore. Christiana Care features a Level III neonatal intensive care unit, the only delivering hospital in Delaware that offers this highest level of care to the most critically ill newborns. Christiana Care includes two hospitals with 1,100 patient beds.

For more information about Christiana Care, visit www.christianacare.org/howeare

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