



*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

## ***CHILDREN'S MERCY TO ESTABLISH NEW FETAL HEALTH CENTER***

**Kansas City, Mo – September 16, 2009** – Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics is establishing a new Fetal Health Center, designed to provide an integrated, multidisciplinary approach to caring for infants with serious congenital birth defects before, during and after delivery.

The first step in the development of the Fetal Health Center is an outpatient clinic, which will provide diagnosis and consultation for mothers of fetuses with complex birth defects. The clinic will open at Children's Mercy College Boulevard Clinics, Overland Park, KS, this month. The clinic is headed by Timothy Bennett, M.D., a maternal/fetal medicine specialist who has practiced in Kansas City for more than 20 years. Dr. Bennett also serves as vice-chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine.

The new center, developed in collaboration with the UMKC medical school, will provide prenatal diagnostic and consultation services for fetuses with complex birth defects and integrated multidisciplinary care following diagnosis, as well as neonatal and pediatric subspecialty care for these infants after birth. Plans also call for a delivery service for healthy mothers with babies who have been diagnosed with serious congenital birth defects to be added in the fall of 2010.

"Children's Mercy has provided state-of-the-art care for critically-ill newborns for decades, but our new Fetal Health Center will allow us to begin that care even earlier in the process, providing an integrated approach to the baby's care beginning before he or she is born and continuing through delivery and post-natal care," says Randall L. O'Donnell, Ph.D., president and CEO at Children's Mercy. "We are excited that we will be able to provide this new, higher level of care to Kansas City area families, working in collaboration with our partners at UMKC and throughout our region."

When the Fetal Health Center is completed, Children's Mercy will become only the second pediatric hospital in the nation to provide staffing and delivery services within the children's hospital itself. The new program also will allow families whose newborns have serious birth defects requiring subspecialty care to remain in the same hospital with their infant.

### **About Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics**

Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics in Kansas City, Mo. is one of the nation's top, pediatric medical centers. Recognized by both the American Nurses Credentialing Center for excellence in nursing services, and ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of

“America's Best Children's Hospitals” in 2009 for 5 specialties, Children's Mercy continues to provide outstanding pediatric care for children from birth through the age of 18. With a 314-bed facility, Level IIIc neonatal intensive care unit, Level I pediatric trauma center, faculty of 600 pediatricians, and [40 subspecialties](#), it is one of the largest and most comprehensive pediatric medical centers in the country. In addition to a mission of caring for children regardless of their family's ability to pay, Children's Mercy is actively involved in clinical care, pediatric research, and educating the next generation of pediatric subspecialists. More information about Children's Mercy and its research can be found on our web site at [childrensmercy.org](http://childrensmercy.org).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

**Barbara J. Mueth**  
Vice President, Community Relations  
816-346-1341  
[bmuet@cmh.edu](mailto:bmuet@cmh.edu)

**Sherry D. Gibbs**  
Public Information Officer  
816-346-1340  
[sdgibbs@cmh.edu](mailto:sdgibbs@cmh.edu)

###