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## **San Joaquin County Celebrates Level II Trauma Center Designation**

**Stockton, CA** – San Joaquin County General Hospital (SJGH) announced this week the official Level II Trauma Center designation by the San Joaquin County Emergency Medical Services Agency (SJCEMSA). As the only hospital receiving trauma patients within San Joaquin County, this Level II designation achievement will enhance life-saving trauma treatment at SJGH and throughout the region.

“The citizens of San Joaquin County have empowered the Board of Supervisors through the SJCEMSA to give appropriate resources to San Joaquin County General Hospital to provide trauma services for all 762,000 residents of this County,” said Dr. Frank Kennedy, Trauma Medical Director of Trauma Services for San Joaquin County General Hospital. “In an effort to ensure compliance with the highest standards of care, these entities worked collaboratively as SJGH progressed to Level II Trauma Center status. We all look forward to furthering our standards and successes by becoming verified through the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma later this year.”

As a Level II Trauma Center SJGH will provide immediate trauma surgery, emergency medicine, critical care, neurology, thoracic and other specialty services. Additionally, the Level II Trauma Center serves as a regional resource accepting complex cases from community hospitals and lower-level trauma centers. Elements of a Level II Trauma Center include:

- 24-hour immediate coverage by in-house general surgeons that are board certified by American Board of Surgery, as well as coverage by the specialties of orthopedic surgery, neurosurgery, anesthesiology, emergency medicine, radiology and critical care.
- Tertiary care needs such as cardiac surgery, hemodialysis and microvascular surgery may be referred to a Level I Trauma Center.
- Trauma prevention and continuing education programs for staff.
- A comprehensive quality assessment program.

Numerous medical studies document the efficacy of trauma systems for improving patient morbidity and mortality. The fundamental component of a trauma system is the designation of a limited number of hospitals with the capability of operating as a trauma center. Concentrating major trauma

cases in a limited number of hospitals with specialized trauma capabilities allows trauma surgeons, emergency department physicians, and other trauma team personnel to achieve and maintain a level of proficiency and skill to significantly impact trauma survival rates.

Trauma Center Verification is an evaluation process done by the American College of Surgeons (ACS) to evaluate and improve trauma care. The ACS does not designate trauma centers; instead, it verifies the presence of the resources listed in Resources for Optimal Care of the Injured Patient. These include commitment, readiness, resources, policies, patient care, and performance improvement. SJGH served as a Level III Trauma Center for 8 years prior to becoming a Level II Trauma Center.

“The EMS Agency and San Joaquin General Hospital, as the designated trauma center, have worked together to coordinate our efforts with a single mission which was to achieve high performance levels of multi-disciplined trauma care services never seen before in San Joaquin County. County residents can rest assured that these trauma services are available to our local communities 24/7,” concluded Katherine Shafer, MD, Medical Director of the San Joaquin County Emergency Medical Services Agency.

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