



PRESS RELEASE

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NATIVIDAD MEDICAL CENTER ANNOUNCES 33- MINUTE WAIT TIME IN ER *Average wait time in the U.S. is one hour for emergency room patients*

SALINAS, CA – November 11, 2008 –The Natividad Medical Center's Emergency Department, which treats up to 140 patients daily, has reported the wait time for patients in its emergency room has been reduced from 3 hours to an average of 33 minutes. According to Jeffrey Bass, M.D., the director of the Emergency Department, this change is due to a new Rapid Medical Evaluation (RME) program instituted at the hospital last year. A report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in August, 2008, stated that the average emergency room wait time in the U.S. is one hour.

The Rapid Medical Evaluation (RME) program incorporates highly trained emergency department staff dedicated to assessing and treating patients based on the severity of their condition. Patients are rapidly seen and evaluated and then promptly moved to the portion of the emergency room most suited to the severity of their injury or illness.

"Our patients have been very pleased that we see them quickly, provide them with excellent quality, compassionate care and help them to understand their condition and what they can do for themselves at home to get better, said Jeffrey Bass, M.D., director of Natividad Medical Center's emergency department.

Additionally, the Natividad Medical Center's Emergency Department received a Distinguished Performance Award in recognition of its dramatic improvements in operations and patient satisfaction from the California Emergency Physicians (CEP) Medical Group. This award is given to only three out of CEP's 77 sites nationwide.

The vision for NMC's Emergency Department echoes the Hospital's VISION 2010 and emphasizes patient safety and high quality care combined with service excellence to provide patients with the best possible experience given their adverse circumstances.

For more information about the Natividad Medical Center please call 831-755-4111 or visit www.natividad.com.

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About Natividad Medical Center

Natividad Medical Center is a 172-bed acute care medical center owned and operated by Monterey County, and has been providing healthcare for more than 120 years. A public community hospital, Natividad Medical Center emphasizes the care of women, children and families and offers comprehensive inpatient, outpatient, diagnostic and specialty care. With a medical staff of more than 235 physicians, Natividad's mission is to continually improve the health status of the people of Monterey County through access to affordable, high-quality healthcare services. Natividad is based in Salinas, California. For more information, please call 831-755-4111 or visit www.natividad.com.