



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release...

State's Largest Cardiology Groups Merge

5/21/2002 - Albuquerque, New Mexico: Two of New Mexico's largest and most respected cardiology groups merged last week. Effective May 15, 2002, Southwest Cardiology Associates and New Mexico Heart Institute were combined into one business organization. The new, larger practice will retain the name New Mexico Heart Institute, but will be represented by a redesigned logo "that brings together the best elements of both groups," according to Harvey White, MD, a former Southwest Cardiology Associates partner.

The "new" New Mexico Heart Institute maintains a comprehensive statewide presence, with offices in Albuquerque, Farmington, Santa Fe, Espanola, Los Alamos and Roswell. The practice now consists of over thirty (30) cardiologists and five (5) cardiovascular/thoracic surgeons, with more additions to the medical staff expected before the end of the year.

Southwest Cardiology Associates and New Mexico Heart Institute have long been leaders in New Mexico heart care, and in 1998 became founding partners in the Heart Hospital of New Mexico, now the state's leading heart care facility. "Both groups have considered this move for a long time, and we felt that given the increasingly challenging nature of the healthcare market, this was the right time to get together." said Richard Gerety, cardiovascular surgeon and president of New Mexico Heart Institute. "Both SWCA and NMHI have well-established and very well-respected practices, and each brings unique qualities to the table. We feel the new organization will be greater than the sum of its parts." stated Dr. Harvey White.

The physicians claim that the merger will increase their ability to deliver quality heart care throughout the state. CEO Mike Bukowski observed that "by combining our regional offices, our medical staff, and our resources, we will be able to deliver more care, more efficiently, and with the latest technology."

Plans are underway to build a medical office building on the Heart Hospital campus, which will house the business operations and most of the clinical services for the Albuquerque market. The building is slated to open in fall of 2003. NMHI will retain its' regional offices, and an office on Albuquerque's West Side.

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