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## **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia and University Hospital Announce Contract Agreements**

AUGUSTA, GA. – Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia (BCBSGa) and University Hospital announced today that they have reached agreements on three-year contracts, effective July 1, 2008.

Under the agreements, BCBSGa HMO/POS and PPO members will be able to continue to access University Hospital as an in-network provider.

“We are extremely pleased to reach new agreements with University Hospital,” said Monye Connolly, president, BCBSGa. “Since joining our networks two and a half years ago, University has been an important member of the BCBSGa network in the Augusta area. We have received positive feedback from many of our members regarding their access to care at University, and we look forward to continuing our relationship with the hospital.”

“Continuing this association with BCBSGa helps ensure residents throughout the Augusta region have access to their hospital of choice,” said J. Larry Read, president/CEO of University Health Care System. “Access to care is fundamental. We will always help ensure that residents of this region have access to the high-quality, state-of-the-art care that University delivers every day.”

University Hospital’s relationship with BCBSGa extends beyond provider agreements. University has been named a Blue Distinction Provider for Cardiac Care by the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.

“This means University’s cardiac program has met stringent quality criteria, as established by expert physician panels and national organizations, that demonstrate better outcomes, consistent care and greater value,” Mr. Read said.

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### **About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia**

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association and is an operating subsidiary of WellPoint Inc., the largest publicly traded commercial health benefits company in terms of membership in the United States. WellPoint, Inc. is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and serves its members as the Blue Cross licensee for California; the Blue Cross and Blue Shield licensee for Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Missouri (excluding 30 counties in the Kansas

City area), Nevada, New Hampshire, New York (as Blue Cross Blue Shield in 10 New York City metropolitan counties and as Blue Cross, Blue Shield or Blue Cross Blue Shield in selected upstate counties only), Ohio, Virginia (excluding the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C.), Wisconsin; and through UniCare. Additional information about WellPoint is available at <http://www.wellpoint.com>. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia can be found on the web at <http://www.bcbsga.com>.

### **About University Hospital**

University Health Care System offers a comprehensive range of services throughout 25 counties in Georgia and South Carolina. The cornerstone of the system is University Hospital, a 581-bed community nonprofit hospital that leads the region in diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular disease and cancer, and is noted as a leader in obstetrical and gynecological care. More than 600 physicians practice at University Hospital, representing nearly every medical and surgical specialty. University has been named the Consumer Choice Award winner in the Augusta area for nine consecutive years for overall quality and image, and is the only hospital in Augusta to have the Magnet designation for nursing excellence. More information is available at <http://www.universityhealth.org>.