

Contact: Lucinda I. Ames 203-576-5550 Lames@stvincents.org

For Immediate Release

ST. VINCENT'S HOSTS HEALTHCARE REFORM DISCUSSION ON WICC SHOW AS PART OF OBAMA-LED EFFORTS

BRIDGEPORT, CT, December 17, 2008—St. Vincent's Medical Center is hosting a public discussion on healthcare reform on its *Healthtalk* radio call-in show on WICC (600 on your AM dial) this **Monday, December 22 at 7:05pm**. The one hour live call-in show will feature regular host Frank Scifo, MD, and his guest Senior Corporate Vice President Ronald J. Bianchi. Listeners may pose a question or share their healthcare stories by calling **203-333-WICC (9422)**.

St. Vincent's, a member of Ascension Health, is offering this forum as part of a nationwide effort to fix the healthcare system spearheaded by the Obama transition team led by former Senator Tom Daschle.

Bianchi stated that this program will provide the people of Fairfield County a forum on health care that will be shared with the new administration. "Share your ideas and be heard by calling the show," he said.

Ascension, the nation's largest not-for-profit healthcare system, has been invited by the president-elect's policy advisors to share its system-wide commitment to healthcare reform. Ascension has invited all its member hospitals to host discussions for the public on this topic of vital importance. The system has made progress in its commitment to achieve 100% access to healthcare and 100% coverage for all by delivering more than 147 advocacy speeches, having 71 letters and op-eds published and making 115 legislative visits.

Ascension Health is also a part of the Health Care Leadership Council, which represents large health care corporations. The group is planning to hold community meetings in California, Georgia and Oklahoma, among other states. The council is a coalition of chief executives from 40 companies including Aetna, Ascension Health, CVS Caremark, Eli Lilly, Medtronic, Merck and Pfizer.

Ascension Health serves patients through a network of hospitals and related health facilities providing acute care services, long-term care, community health services, psychiatric, rehabilitation and residential care. Its hospitals and related health facilities are staffed with over 106,000 associates located in 20 states and the District of Columbia. To learn more, visit www.ascensionhealth.org.

For more information on the healthcare reform discussion and radio show, call **203-576-5256**.