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## **Avera Heart Hospital of South Dakota Named One of the Nation's Top Cardiovascular Hospitals by Thomson Reuters**

**Sioux Falls, SD – November 17, 2008-** Avera Heart Hospital of South Dakota has been named one of the nation's 100 Top Hospitals® for cardiovascular care by the Healthcare business of Thomson Reuters.

The annual study — *2008 Thomson Reuters 100 Top Hospitals®: Cardiovascular Benchmarks for Success* — examined the performance of 970 hospitals by analyzing clinical outcomes for patients diagnosed with heart failure and heart attacks and for those who received coronary bypass surgery and angioplasties.

This is the **third year Avera Heart Hospital** has been recognized with this honor. The 2008 winners were announced November 17 in *Modern Healthcare* magazine.

"These hospitals provide enormous value to their communities because heart disease is still the nation's number one killer. They have set the new national standard for cardiovascular disease outcomes, process of care, efficiency, and lower costs," said Jean Chenoweth, senior vice president for performance improvement and 100 Top Hospitals programs in the Healthcare business of Thomson Reuters.

The study, in its tenth year, found that the 100 Top Hospitals cardiovascular award winners, as a group, performed 63 percent more bypass surgeries and 42 percent more angioplasties than peer hospitals. This may suggest that performance of bypass surgery is increasingly performed in centers of excellence.

While the average mortality rate for cardiovascular patients is very low (3.4 percent), the mortality rate for bypass surgery was 26 percent lower in the 100 Top Hospitals cardiovascular winners. The award-winning hospitals demonstrated higher performance on the evidence-based core measures published by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and cost \$1,542 less per case, on average.

"This award is a reflection of our staff's commitment to exceptional care. The Heart Hospital offers an entire team of physicians, nurses and other specialties who look at each individual patient's needs to choose the best course of treatment. This team approach ensures that patients experience shorter hospital stays, comparable costs and overall better outcomes," said Jon Soderholm, CEO of the Avera Heart Hospital..

The 100 Top Hospitals study focused on short-term, acute care, non-federal U.S. hospitals that treat a broad spectrum of cardiology patients. Thomson Reuters researchers analyzed 2006 and 2007 Medicare Provider Analysis and Review (MedPAR) data, 2007 Medicare cost reports, and data from other sources. They scored hospitals in key performance areas: risk-adjusted medical mortality, risk-adjusted surgical mortality, risk-adjusted complications, core measures score, percentage of coronary bypass patients with internal mammary artery use, procedure volume, severity-adjusted average length of stay, and wage- and severity-adjusted average cost.

The measures were calculated for three classes of hospitals with the following number of winners in each:

- Teaching with cardiovascular residency programs, 30 winners
- Teaching without cardiovascular residency programs, 40 winners
- Community, 30 winners

***About Avera Heart Hospital***

The **Avera Heart Hospital of South Dakota** is the region's first and only hospital dedicated solely to the diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular disease. By focusing on the nation's number one killer, patients receive the benefits of advanced technology and personalized services focused on their individual needs. The hospital is a cooperative venture between Avera McKennan, North Central Heart Institute and MedCath, Inc.

**About Thomson Reuters**

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More information on this study and other 100 Top Hospitals research is available at [www.100tohospitals.com](http://www.100tohospitals.com).