



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Baptist Health Care Achieves Fitwel Certification for Bear Family Foundation Health Center**

**PENSACOLA, FLA. (Aug. 2, 2023)** – Baptist Health Care has achieved Fitwel® certification for the design of its Bear Family Foundation Health Center located at the new Baptist Hospital campus on Brent Lane. Fitwel is the world’s leading certification system committed to building health for all.

The Bear Health Center earned the Fitwel certification for evidence-based health and wellness design and operational strategies. The facility design supports the physical, mental and social health and well-being of team members and the community.

“This certification is a testament to our team’s dedication and planning over the last several years to ensure we built a modern health center that promotes a healthy, safe and innovative environment for our patients, team members, and community,” said John Porter, vice president, corporate construction, Baptist Health Care.

Gresham Smith, an architecture, engineering and design firm, collaborated with Baptist Health Care team members to create the \$650 million new Baptist Hospital campus. Features of the Bear Health Center’s design that contributed to the certification include outdoor amenities such as walking paths and restorative gardens, access to healthy food options and quality drinking water, an active stair design to encourage walking rather than elevator use, sit-to-stand workstations for all employees, shared multi-purpose spaces for community engagement, an onsite bus stop and emergency preparedness strategies.

“We applaud Baptist Health Care’s commitment to designing a facility geared around the health and wellness of not only their patients, but their staff members as well. This commitment allowed the team to prioritize strategies that activated the campus and focused on both physical and mental health,” said Skip Yauger, senior vice president, Gresham Smith.

Scheduled to open this fall, the Bear Health Center is a 178,000-square-foot building with 6 floors and 162 exam rooms. The center offers physician offices and a variety of services, including those for oncology, infusion, imaging, bariatrics, surgery, cardiology, lab and pharmacy. In addition, Panera Bread is located on the ground floor and a conference center is on the second floor for events, meetings and community outreach.

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For more information about this press release or to schedule an interview, send an email to [BHCMediaRelations@bhcpns.org](mailto:BHCMediaRelations@bhcpns.org) or call 850.791.5254.

#### *About Baptist Health Care*

*Baptist Health Care is a not-for-profit health care organization based in Northwest Florida that is committed to helping people throughout life's journey. Baptist continuously strives to be a national leader in quality and service. Baptist Health Care includes three hospitals, four medical parks, Andrews Institute for Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine and a large network of primary care and specialty physicians. Baptist Health Care is one of the largest non-governmental employers in Northwest Florida.*

- Baptist Health Care • Baptist Hospital • Gulf Breeze Hospital • Jay Hospital*  
*• Baptist Medical Parks Airport, Nine Mile, Navarre and Pace • Andrews Institute • Baptist Medical Group*  
*• Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute • Baptist Health Care Foundation*

#### *About Fitwel and the Center for Active Design*

*In just three years, [Fitwel](#) has become the leading global health certification system, seeing a dramatic uptick in use, with 80% growth in certifications annually. Generated by expert analysis of over 5,600 academic research studies, Fitwel is implementing a vision for a healthier future where all buildings and communities are enhanced to strengthen health and well-being. Fitwel was created by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and U.S. General Services Administration. The Center for Active Design, a global not-for-profit organization, was selected as the licensed operator of Fitwel, charged with expanding Fitwel to the global market.*