THE QUEEN’S MEDICAL CENTER IS FIRST IN HAWAII TO OFFER NEW MINIMALLY INVASIVE TRANSCATHETER HEART VALVE REPLACEMENT

QMC among the first in the nation to use this new technology on patients outside of clinical trials

HONOLULU – The Queen’s Medical Center has been selected as the only hospital in the state to offer a new cardiac treatment of aortic stenosis, a serious condition of the narrowing of the heart valve, to select patients who are deemed inoperable for surgery. On November 2, 2011 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved this new procedure, the Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR) with the SAPIEN heart valve from Edwards Lifesciences. As a selected site, Queen’s Heart is also partnering with other Hawaii cardiac surgeons and cardiologists and forming the Pacific Valve Consortium, which will help identify and treat Hawaii patients who can benefit from TAVR.

“Queen’s Heart, in collaboration with the Pacific Valve Consortium, is among the first in the nation chosen to use this new technology outside of earlier research trials,” said Art Ushijima, President of The Queen’s Medical Center. “Queen’s is honored to be the only medical center selected in Hawaii to perform TAVR and we look forward to partnering with other Hawaii physicians to broaden our reach of potential TAVR participants.”

“TAVR is truly transformational as this technology will change the way we practice cardiovascular medicine and surgery in the United States,” said Dr. Christian Spies, Medical Director of Cardiac Invasive Labs and Interventional Cardiologist at The Queen’s Medical Center. “For patients who are not surgical candidates, TAVR can substantially improve their health status and quality of life compared to standard therapy.”

With an aging population, more than 100,000 people in the United States live with significant aortic stenosis. However, a large group of these patients are high risk or non-surgical candidates, and it is this patient population in which TAVR will initially have a role. Over the last four years, the SAPIEN heart valve from Edwards Lifesciences has been evaluated in a large randomized controlled trial in the United States by assessing the technique in high risk or inoperable candidates. The first iteration of this valve was implanted in 2002, and TAVR has also been performed for the last four years in Europe and Canada.

“Before the approval of TAVR, the only realistic treatment option has been surgical aortic valve replacement, which requires open heart surgery,” said Dr. Jeffrey Lau, Chief Department of Cardiovascular Diseases and CardioThoracic Surgeon at The Queen’s Medical Center. “Now, this percutaneous transcatheter aortic valve replacement technology has been developed to allow...
replacement of the aortic valve with catheters, or TAVR. These valve replacements are either inserted via an artery in the groin or through the tip of the heart via a small incision in between the ribs.”

The use of this new technology – currently restricted to only selected centers across the nation – requires a specific team like The Queen’s Center for Valve and Structural Heart Disease at Queen’s Heart and the Pacific Valve Consortium that consists of a network of cardiovascular surgeons, non-invasive cardiologists, interventional cardiologists, radiologists and nurse practitioners who work collaboratively to provide comprehensive care for patients with valvular heart disease and structural or adult congenital heart disease.

“For the past two years, cardiac surgeons and cardiologists at Queen’s Heart have been teaming up to bring this new technology to the islands,” said Cathy Young, Vice President of Cardiac, Medicine and Geriatrics at The Queen’s Medical Center. “Thanks to their diligent efforts, and with the establishment of the Pacific Valve Consortium, we now have an alternative in Hawaii to treat more patients who may be too ill to receive standard surgical valve replacement therapy.”

Patients will be evaluated at the Valve Clinic of The Queen’s Center for Valve and Structural Heart Disease. Patients will be evaluated by a multi-disciplinary team to determine if TAVR is feasible. For more information, call (808) 691-8808, email valveclinic@queens.org or go to www.qhpp.com.

Edwards Lifesciences focuses on the science of heart valves and hemodynamic monitoring. The company partners with clinicians to develop innovative technologies in the areas of structural heart disease and critical care monitoring.

For more information about The Queen’s Medical Center, please visit www.queens.org.

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The Queen’s Medical Center is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation, acute care medical facility accredited by The Joint Commission. The facility houses 505 acute beds and 28 sub-acute beds and is widely known for its programs in cancer, cardiovascular disease, neuroscience, orthopaedics, surgery, emergency medicine and trauma, and behavioral medicine. Queen’s is home to a number of residency programs offered in conjunction with the John A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawaii. Queen’s has achieved Magnet® status – the highest institutional honor for hospital excellence – from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. Magnet recognition is held by six percent of hospitals in the United States. Queen’s is the first hospital in Hawai’i to achieve Magnet status.