



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**WOMENHEART ANNOUNCES GRANT APPLICATIONS NOW BEING
ACCEPTED FOR NATIONAL HOSPITAL ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIPS**

**Grants Will Support Hospital Efforts to Advance Women's Heart Health and
Address Heart Valve Disease in Underserved Communities**

May 17, 2017 (Washington, DC) – WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease today encouraged all hospitals committed to women's cardiovascular care to apply for a one-year funded membership to WomenHeart's National Hospital Alliance. The National Hospital Alliance is a collaborative partnership between WomenHeart and more than 40 leading hospitals across the United States committed to advancing women's heart health.

These grants, supported by the Edwards Lifesciences Foundation, will support hospitals that reach underserved women. Special consideration will be given to hospitals in communities with the highest prevalence of heart valve disease, including those in Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New York and Washington.

"While many people know that heart disease is the leading cause of death among women, heart valve disease is often overlooked," said Mary McGowan, Chief Executive Officer of WomenHeart. "In fact, heart valve disease is the third most common cause of heart problems in the U.S., and can pose unique challenges for women. These grants will help ensure that women with heart disease – and especially heart valve disease -- will benefit from valuable WomenHeart resources and peer-led support services in their local hospitals."

Although women develop problems with heart valves as often as men do, some issues – including abnormalities resulting from rheumatic fever and mitral valve prolapse – occur more often in women than in men. Heart valve disease is a particular challenge for women of childbearing age, since in severe cases it can increase pregnancy risks for mother and baby. Older women also are at risk for leaky or blocked heart valves.

Hospitals chosen for participation will receive financial support for a one-year membership in the WomenHeart National Hospital Alliance from July 2017 through October 2018. Hospitals will be entitled to nominate up to two women diagnosed with heart disease to be trained at the annual WomenHeart Science & Leadership Symposium, to be held October 6-9, 2017 at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. Once trained, these women will return to the hospital community as a *WomenHeart Champion*, to provide peer support and community education about women's heart disease.



National Hospital Alliance member hospitals also receive training and technical assistance from WomenHeart to establish and maintain a post-discharge, peer-led WomenHeart Support Network for female heart patients – a proven model to improve patient outcomes. Other benefits include: access to WomenHeart’s educational materials, participation in special educational programs, training to serve as a spokesperson during media opportunities and professional education for their hospital and clinician staff.

Applications must be accepted by June 9th for consideration. [The Call for Applications form is available online](#) and should be submitted to evining@womenheart.org. Grant applicants are asked to use the subject line “GRANT APPLICATION” and also include the name of their hospital.

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About the WomenHeart National Hospital Alliance

The WomenHeart National Hospital Alliance is an innovative collaborative partnership between WomenHeart and more than 40 leading hospitals throughout the United States committed to advancing women’s heart health. National Hospital Alliance members ensure female heart disease patients have access to gender-specific information, education and patient support services that empower them to take charge of their heart health. Additionally, the NHA provides ongoing education for clinicians on new and emerging research related to women’s heart disease.

About WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease

WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease is the nation's only patient centered organization solely serving the nearly 48 million American women living with or at risk for heart disease – the leading cause of death in women. WomenHeart is devoted to advancing women's heart health through advocacy, community education, and the nation's only patient support network for women living with heart disease. WomenHeart is both a coalition and a community of thousands of members nationwide, including women heart patients and their families, physicians, and health advocates, all committed to helping women live longer, healthier lives. To receive a free on line heart health action kit or to donate, visit www.womenheart.org.