



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Elizabeth Dowling  
212-523-4047

## **Beth Israel Medical Center & St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center Earn National LGBT Healthcare Equality Recognition**

*The Only Two Hospitals in New York State to Receive Perfect Scores on The Human Rights Campaign's Healthcare Equality Index*

New York, NY (July 5, 2011) Beth Israel Medical Center and St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center, the lead hospitals in the Continuum Health Partners network, are the only hospitals in New York State to receive perfect scores on the Healthcare Equality Index survey sponsored by the national Human Rights Campaign Foundation, the country's largest and most influential organization advocating for the rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community.

The Healthcare Equality Index focuses on key policies and practices that lay the foundation for a welcoming environment for LGBT patients and families. Among the hospitals' policies that were reviewed as part of the survey are those pertaining to patient and employment non-discrimination; visitation and cultural competency training for staff. This is the second year in a row that Beth Israel has received this designation and the first year for SLR.

"Since formally creating a comprehensive diversity initiative six years ago, we have implemented programs and policies that encourage associates to be comfortable with diversity and develop an appreciation for differences in race, gender and background in addition to sexual orientation," says Stanley Brezenoff, President and Chief Executive Officer of Continuum Health Partners. "Our recognition as a 'Top Performer' by the HRC Foundation is a tremendous endorsement of our commitment to champion a diverse workplace and foster an inclusive culture that delivers quality care to our diverse patient population."

Beth Israel and St. Luke's-Roosevelt are at the forefront of a healthcare landscape that is facing sweeping change for LGBT patient care. A recent study by the National Institutes of Health and new requirements of The Joint Commission, which accredits and certifies

- more -

healthcare facilities nationwide, underscore the need for all healthcare organizations to provide equitable, knowledgeable care to LGBT patients and their families.

“The HRC Healthcare Equality Index is viewed as an important tool in evaluating how a healthcare organization meets equality requirements,” says Michael Graziano, Co-Chair of the LGBT Committee at Beth Israel and one of several individuals who worked on completing the exhaustive HEI survey for that hospital. “We take enormous pride in the fact that we lead the nation in terms of our commitment to standards of equality and we urge all healthcare facilities to move toward greater inclusiveness to provide healthcare that is free of prejudice.”

For a link to the Healthcare Equality Index report and other supporting materials, please visit <http://www.hrc.org/hei2011/>.

###