

TO MEDIA:

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EXCELA HEALTH ADDS NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART
SURGICAL DEVICE FOR HEART PATIENT CARE**

GREENSBURG, PA, March 28, 2022 ... Heart valve surgery can be especially difficult in patients with a large amount of calcification, where there is a heightened risk that the built-up plaque may break away and enter the blood stream and thus cause a stroke.

Thanks to a \$231,000 gift from the Westmoreland/Frick Hospital Foundation, Excelsa Health cardiothoracic surgeons now have a device to help mitigate such risks, and benefit patients who might otherwise have been considered inoperable.

The Health System acquired the CUSA® Clarity Ultrasonic Surgical Aspirator System by Integra for use in surgical procedures where fragmentation, emulsification and aspiration of soft tissue is desirable. The CUSA uses ultrasonic frequencies to essentially emulsify the target tissues. The ultrasound waves cause the cells to dissociate from one another while the device irrigates the area with sterile saline. The same handpiece then aspirates the fluid back out of the surgical site, resulting in a comparatively clean surgical field.

“The addition of this technology is another reflection of the evolution and sophistication of our cardiovascular surgery program and our ability to care for the most complex of patients on a local basis.” noted Denise Addis, MSN, RN, CPHQ, Vice President of Cardiovascular Services at Excelsa Health.

Excelsa Health cardiothoracic surgeon Hiroyuki Tsukui, MD, PhD, cited statistics reported during the 2021 annual meeting of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, that demonstrate how valuable CUSA has proven to be in other cardiothoracic programs. “The research study indicated that in instances where CUSA was employed, there was a ZERO rate of stroke or death for the patient with severe mitral valve calcification, versus a 10 percent rate of death, and 7 percent rate of stroke when CUSA was not used. The device has clear patient benefits and measurable positive outcomes.”

John Sphon, Excelsa Health’s Chief Executive Officer, added, “Our structural heart program continues to expand in scope and service, thanks to the skills of our cardiothoracic surgeons, and the addition of the surgical tools and instrumentation to accomplish complex surgeries. The community’s support through donations to our Foundations helps to make these improvements to care possible. Excelsa Health is not just a provider of care, the Health System through its clinical and support staff is a partner in care. We are gratified to have earned the community’s trust and confidence in our ability to meet their health needs.”