

TO MEDIA

CONTACT:

Tom Chakurda
Chief Marketing and Communications Officer
thomas.chakurda@independence.health
412-508-6816 CELL

Melissa Forster
Marketing & Communications Specialist
melissa.forster@independence.health
814-490-6057 CELL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Photo: (Left) Dr. Varun Avula (Right) Dr. Dinesh Bhaskaran

Butler Memorial Hospital Performs First Procedure Using EVOLUT™ FX+ TAVR System for Patients with Symptomatic Severe Aortic Stenosis

Butler, PA – Sept. 3, 2024. . . Independence Health System continues to enhance its cardiovascular program offerings. In August, Butler Memorial Hospital treated its first patient using the Evolut™ FX+ transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) system, a minimally invasive alternative to open-heart surgical aortic valve replacement. Butler Memorial is among the first in the region to provide this new TAVR system, which further refines the trusted Evolut TAVR platform, designed to facilitate coronary access, for the treatment of severe aortic stenosis (SSAS).

"We are pleased with how the Evolut TAVR platform has evolved over time," said Dinesh Bhaskaran, MD, FACS, cardiothoracic surgeon at Butler

Memorial Hospital. “This new TAVR system provides our heart team with another minimally invasive treatment option to enhance patient outcomes with severe aortic stenosis.”

Aortic stenosis occurs when the aortic valve leaflets become stiff and thickened and have difficulty opening and closing, making the heart work harder to pump blood to the rest of the body. The disease can impact quality of life and limits one’s ability to participate in daily activities. According to the American Heart Association, common symptoms of aortic stenosis in adults include chest pain, rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, dizziness, difficulty walking short distances, swollen ankles or feet, difficulty sleeping and a decline in activity levels.

“Our team is committed to offering the community the latest medical advancements in cardiovascular care, without the need to travel far,” said Varun Avula, DO, interventional cardiologist at Butler Memorial Hospital. “We look forward to utilizing the Evolut FX+ system to further advance the quality of care we provide at Independence Health System.”

The Evolut TAVR FX+ system offers larger coronary access windows through a modified diamond-shaped frame design, which is four times larger than previous iterations of the Evolut TAVR system. The Evolut FX+ system provides increased space designed for catheter maneuverability to facilitate access to the coronary arteries of varying patient anatomies. Additionally, the new design maintains the valve performance, excellent hemodynamics, and radial strength that clinicians expect from the Evolut platform.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently approved the Evolut FX+ TAVR system, providing physicians at Butler Memorial Hospital with another option to treat the growing ssAS patient population. To learn more about the cardiovascular services at Independence Health System or to schedule an appointment, visit www.independence.health.

-30-

Nationally recognized for quality care, Independence Health System comprises Butler Memorial, Clarion, Frick, Latrobe and Westmoreland Hospitals with a combined bed count of 925. With more than 1,000 physicians and advanced practice providers and 7,300 employees, the System is the third largest in western Pennsylvania serving a population base of 750,000 in a footprint spanning more than 10 counties.

The System includes tertiary programs rated among America's best for cardiac care and surgery, earning [accolades from a number of prestigious outlets and organizations](#). Locally owned and locally controlled, Independence Health System offers its patients low-cost, high-quality care across the care spectrum in such specialties as cardiology, cardiovascular and thoracic surgery, orthopedics and sports medicine, minimally invasive and robotic surgery, women's health and obstetrics, emergency medicine, behavioral health and primary care. Its network of outpatient centers sees more than 1.2 million visits annually. The homecare division further supports patients at all stages of life with home health and hospice services. Learn more at www.independence.health