



**American Hospital  
Association®**

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## *NEWS RELEASE*

### **MARY ELLEN PRATT, MHA, FACHE, TO CHAIR AHA'S SECTION FOR SMALL OR RURAL GOVERNING COUNCIL**

**WASHINGTON** – February 5, 2015 – Mary Ellen Pratt, MHA, FACHE, CEO of St. James Parish Hospital in Litcher, La., will lead the American Hospital Association's (AHA) Section for Small or Rural Hospitals in 2016. The 18-person governing council represents small or rural hospitals in the AHA's policy process and member services initiatives.

Pratt has led St. James Parish Hospital, a 25-bed critical access hospital, since 2007. Pratt completed a hospital replacement construction project and successfully relocated the hospital to a new facility. She also planned and designed the medical office building and hospital five-bed expansion. Prior to this role, she served as administrator for University Hospital and Clinics-Holmes County and interim director of business development for the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

Pratt is a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and of the National Rural Health Association, a member of the National Advisory Team for the Office of Rural Health, a board member for Sharecor, LLC of the Louisiana Hospital Association, a member of the Louisiana Health IT Advisory Council and past president of the Louisiana Rural Health Association. Pratt also is active in her community—serving as board member for Louisiana chapter of National Alliance on Mental Illness, advisory board member for Next 25, active volunteer for the American Cancer Society’s Relay for St. James Parish, and as past board member for the Bayou Region Children’s Museum. She received both her bachelor’s degree and her master’s in health administration from Tulane University in New Orleans.

Rachelle Schultz, president and CEO of Winona Health in Winona, Minn., will serve as chair-elect and will assume the role of chair in 2017. Joann Anderson, president and CEO of Southeastern Regional Medical Center, Lumberton, N.C., is immediate past chair.

Larry W. Veitz, chief executive officer, Spearfish Regional Hospital, Spearfish, S.D., is the liaison to the governing council from the AHA Board of Trustees.

The small or rural governing council advises the AHA on federal policy issues. Newly elected members serving three-year terms beginning Jan 1, 2016 include: **Kevin Donovan**, president and CEO, Mt. Ascutney Hospital and Health Center, Windsor, Vt.; **Mary Beth Barr**, CEO, Grant Memorial Hospital, Petersburg, W.Va.; **Thomas Nordwick**, CEO, Uvalde County Hospital Authority, Uvalde, Texas; **Mary Anne Shannon**, Board Member, Marquette General Health System, Marquette, Mich.; and **Eric Bour**, M.D., president, Hillcrest Memorial Hospital, Simpsonville, S.C.

The new governing council members join the following current members: Warren West, CEO, Littleton Regional Hospital, Littleton, N.H.; Jason F. Hawkins, president and CEO, Fulton County Medical Center, McConnellsburg, Pa.; Mark Webster, CEO, Cortland Regional Medical Center, Cortland, N.Y.; Jason Merkley, CEO, Brookings Health System, Brookings, S.D.; Jason Spring, CEO, North Valley Hospital, Whitefish, Mont.; John G. Williams, CEO, Barton Memorial Hospital, South Lake Tahoe, Calif.; Dave Schreiner, president and CEO, Katherine Shaw Bethea Hospital, Dixon, Ill.; Jay Kreuzer, CEO, Kona Community Hospital, Kealahou, Hawaii; Feliciano Jiron, CEO, Los Alamos Medical Center, Los Alamos, N.M.; Joan Coffman, president and CEO, St. Joseph's Hospital, Chippewa Falls, Wis.; and Elmore Patterson, CEO, Greene County Hospital, Eutaw, Ala.

#### **About the AHA's Section for Small or Rural Hospitals**

The AHA's Section for Small or Rural Hospitals provides representation; advocacy and educational opportunities to help the nation's small or rural hospitals better serve the health needs of patients and communities. The AHA is a not-for-profit association of health care provider organizations that are committed to health improvement in their communities. The AHA is the national advocate for its members, which include almost 5,000 hospitals, health care systems, networks and other providers of care. Founded in 1898, AHA provides education for health care leaders and is a source of information on health care issues and trends.

#### **About the AHA**

The AHA is a not-for-profit association of health care provider organizations and individuals that are committed to the health improvement of their communities. The AHA is the national advocate for its members, which include nearly 5,000 hospitals, health care systems, networks, other providers of care and 43,000 individual members. Founded in 1898, the AHA provides education for health care leaders and is a source of information on health care issues and trends. For more information, visit the AHA website at [www.aha.org](http://www.aha.org).

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