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## *News Release*

### **Warner L. Thomas to Lead AHA's Section for Health Care Systems**

**WASHINGTON** (January 4, 2012) – Warner L. Thomas, president and COO, Ochsner Health System in New Orleans is the 2012 chair of the American Hospital Association's (AHA) Section for Health Care Systems, a constituency section representing health systems across the country that provide guidance in AHA's policy development and governance. Thomas will lead a 24-person governing council of health leaders during the year, as the AHA continues to address key legislative and regulatory challenges on the horizon and support hospitals as they strive to work for the health and well-being of their communities.

Thomas has been president and COO of Ochsner Health System, southeast Louisiana's largest non-profit, academic, multi-specialty, health care delivery system with eight hospitals and over 38 health centers, since 2005. He first joined the organization in 1998 as COO of Ochsner Clinic and became COO of Ochsner Clinic Foundation in 2001. Previously, Thomas served for six years as both president of Foundation Medical Partners, Inc., a multi-specialty physician group affiliated with Southern New Hampshire Health System in Nashua, N.H., and vice president of managed care and network development for Southern New Hampshire Medical Center. Before that, he was the medical center's finance director and served briefly as its interim CFO. As a CPA and senior auditor and consultant for Ernst & Young in Manchester, N.H., Thomas worked with a variety of hospitals, health systems, and physician groups throughout New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Maine, and Vermont.

A fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, Thomas has served on the board of the American Medical Group Association and St. George's Episcopal School. He also is a member of the Young Presidents Organization (YPO) and the New Orleans Business Council.

Thomas holds a bachelor's degree in management advisory services from New Hampshire College in Manchester and earned his master's degree in business administration from Boston University.

Stephen Hanson, senior executive vice president of Texas Health Resources in Arlington, Texas, is the chairman-elect and will assume the role of chairman in 2013. Anthony Spezia, president and chief executive officer of Covenant Health in Knoxville, Tenn., is the immediate past chairman.

New appointees elected to serve on the council for three-year terms beginning January 1, 2012, are:

- **Nancy Agee**, President and CEO, Carilion Clinic, Roanoke, Va.
- **David Bronson, M.D.**, President, Cleveland Clinic Regional Hospitals, Cleveland
- **Margaret "Denny" DeNarvaez**, President and CEO, Wellmont Health System, Kingsport, Tenn.
- **David M. Dill**, President and COO, LifePoint Hospitals, Brentwood, Tenn.
- **Michelle Hood**, President and CEO, Eastern Maine Health System, Brewer, Me.
- **Judith Persichilli**, President and CEO, Catholic Health East, Newton Square, Pa.
- **William Thompson**, President and CEO, SSM Health Care, St. Louis
- **Nick Turkal, M.D.**, President and CEO, Aurora Health Care, Milwaukee
- **Arthur Ushijima**, President and CEO, Queen's Health System, Honolulu

### **About the AHA**

The AHA is a not-for-profit association of health care provider organizations and individuals that are committed to the improvement of health 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, 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 website at [www.aha.org](http://www.aha.org).