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**For Immediate Release**  
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## **University Medical Center Opens MHERE for Acute Behavioral Health Care**

**Baton Rouge (July 17, 2008)** – University Medical Center (UMC) has redesigned its emergency services with the creation of its Mental Health Emergency Room Extension (MHERE) housed adjacent to the existing emergency department. The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals has licensed the unit for 10 beds.

The MHERE concept was developed to improve the care of patients experiencing acute behavioral health emergencies. It will provide an environment for evaluation, stabilization and short-term management of these patients in a setting appropriate to their needs.

“Patient care is always the first priority of University Medical Center,” said Larry Dorsey, UMC hospital administrator. “The Mental Health Emergency Room Extension will permit us to maintain this priority for our patients seeking behavioral health care.”

Emergency Department physicians and the nursing and counseling staff will evaluate and treat patients with behavioral health emergencies in the MHERE. UMC will refer patients in need of comprehensive behavioral health care to appropriate agencies and providers and will facilitate admission to an inpatient facility when necessary.

The off-site UMC psychiatric unit currently has 17 staffed beds for adults and will soon have 20 staffed beds. UMC also has an in-house detox unit with 13 beds.

The LSU Health Care System Health Care Services Division is one of the largest public health care delivery systems in the country. It has over 31,000 admissions, 180,000 patient days, 981,000 outpatient visits, and over 270,000 emergency department visits. Each year 1100 residents and fellows from the LSU and Tulane Schools of Medicine and Ochsner Health System and 2,200 nurses and allied health students from many colleges and universities are trained in LSU facilities.

LSU is the largest single provider of uncompensated inpatient care in Louisiana. LSU HCSD hospitals have an economic impact of over \$1.4 billion in asset business activity, \$568 million in personal earnings, and generate over 12,000 jobs.

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