



Date: June 7, 2011

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Shodair Children's Hospital Genetics Laboratory and Education Department Earn Re-Accreditation

HELENA — Shodair Children's Hospital is proud to announce that its genetics laboratory and education department have once again earned re-accreditation:

Shodair's lab recently passed a comprehensive inspection and was awarded accreditation by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. The Joint Commission evaluated the laboratory's performance in complying with nearly 300 standards related to quality control, safety, infection control, leadership, management of human resources, management of information, ongoing performance improvement activities and other issues.

Joint Commission accreditation confirms that Shodair's lab, which has been continuously accredited since 1989, has demonstrated a high level of quality in care and services offered to patients and healthcare providers. Accreditation is awarded for a two-year period, and is indicated by a gold seal specifying national quality approval.

"We're happy to have once again demonstrated our commitment to quality lab services," said Shodair Administrator Jack Casey. "Achieving Joint Commission accreditation for our laboratory is an important part of confirming the expectations of healthcare providers across the country who count on us for accurate and timely genetic testing results." Shodair's lab performs genetic testing upon physician referral or in conjunction with Shodair's genetic outreach clinics across the state.

The Joint Commission evaluates nearly 17,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States. Founded in 1951, it is an independent, not-for-profit organization, and the nation's oldest and largest standards-setting and accrediting body in health care.

Shodair's education department recently earned re-accreditation by the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools (NAAS), marking its thirteenth year of continuous accreditation by the NAAS. In April, a four-person evaluation panel comprised of Montana education professionals visited Shodair's classrooms to observe, interview education staff, and review department records.

Panel members evaluated the hospital's education department according to the Northwest Accreditation Commission's eight standards for accreditation. The standards focused on teaching and learning, improving student performance, and support for teaching and learning. In order to maintain accredited status, schools must demonstrate they meet the standards of accreditation and continually work toward improved student performance.

"Our education department works in tandem with our clinical team to ensure success and healing for each child," said Shodair Administrator Jack Casey. "Our teachers do an outstanding job of educating patients who are anywhere from four to seventeen years old and dealing with significant emotional or

psychiatric illnesses. Accreditation confirms the quality work our education department does, and sets a standard that patients and their families can be assured of.”

Shodair’s education department’s reaccreditation is as a “special purpose school” since it serves students within a hospital. Nearly 70% of its students qualify for special education services, compared to 12% in public school. School is held year-round to help ensure that patients at Shodair continue their education and are ready to return to classrooms around the state when they are discharged.

The NAAS accredits schools in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington.

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***About Shodair Children’s Hospital**—Shodair Children’s Hospital provides acute and residential psychiatric care for Montana children and adolescents, and clinical and laboratory medical genetic services to residents of all ages. Shodair is a non-profit, non-denominational facility and the state’s only Children’s Miracle Network hospital. The medical genetics department at Shodair is the state’s medical genetics program, and provides comprehensive services to patients at the Helena campus and in communities throughout the state via outreach clinics.*