

## **FEDERAL GRANT TO BENEFIT HEART FAILURE PATIENTS**

*Funds allow St. John's Hospital to expand home telemonitoring program*

SPRINGFIELD -- St. John's Hospital has received a \$255,000 federal grant to support expansion of Telehomecare Monitoring for patients with congestive heart failure (CHF) living in rural areas of central and southern Illinois.

Over the past decade, St. John's has successfully managed the follow-up care of heart failure patients through the use of telemonitoring technology. Upon discharge, select CHF patients are provided with a high-tech scale that measures their weight and gathers information about their symptoms and then sends the information via a phone line or Internet connection from their home to Prairie Heart Institute. A physician or nurse is then able to monitor vital information about a patient's condition and when necessary adjust medications or instruct them to visit their doctor or the Emergency Room.

Because the telemonitoring program has had a waiting list, Prairie Heart Institute applied for a federal grant in an effort to provide more scales for CHF patients. The federal grant will allow the program to expand from 38 scales to 194, providing up to 930 CHF patients with access to the technology each year.

"The telemonitoring program has demonstrated dramatic success in not only improving the quality of life for our patients, but also in reducing unplanned readmissions and reducing costs," said Dr. Stephen Jennison, Medical Director, St. John's Hospital's Heart Failure Clinic. "We are excited that this federal grant will allow us to provide scales to more of our patients."

It's estimated that St. John's can save \$10,525 for each CHF patient who avoids an unplanned readmission to the hospital.

Under the grant award from the Health Resources and Services Administration at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, St. John's is also eligible to receive an additional \$500,000 to fund expansion of the program for a second and third year.