



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Pediatric Craniofacial Surgeon Joins Sacred Heart Medical Group

PENSACOLA, Fla. – Pediatric craniofacial surgeon Aaron Wallender, MD, DDS, has joined Sacred Heart Medical Group’s regional physician network. Dr. Wallender will perform surgeries at The Studer Family Children’s Hospital at Sacred Heart and will see patients from his new office on the Sacred Heart Hospital Pensacola campus at 1657 Trinity Drive.

Dr. Wallender is the only pediatric craniofacial surgeon in West Florida and South Alabama. He specializes in managing cleft and craniofacial disorders in children. This includes the surgical treatment of soft tissue and bony deformities of the face and skull. Some of the abnormalities that Dr. Wallender treats includes cleft lip and palate, craniosynostosis, hemifacial microsomia, and Pierre Robin Sequence. Dr. Wallender performs a unique surgery called mandibular distraction osteogenesis. This procedure treats tongue-based obstructive sleep apnea for infants with a small jaw, a condition known as micrognathia. The surgery increases the size of an infant’s lower jaw and moves the oral soft tissues and tongue forward, away from the airway. Another unique surgery Dr. Wallender offers with the neurosurgery team is endoscopic treatment of craniosynostosis (fused cranial suture). This is a less invasive technique that reduces blood loss and the length of surgery/anesthesia, while minimizing the duration of hospitalization.

Dr. Wallender is accepting new patients and most major insurance plans. For information or to schedule an appointment, call 850-416-1575 or visit studerfamilychildrenshospital.com.

Dr. Wallender received his bachelor’s degree from Missouri State University. He graduated as a doctor of dental surgery from the University of Missouri in Kansas City, where he was recognized with the Golden Forceps Award for his excellence in oral surgery. Dr. Wallender then received his medical degree with distinction from the University of Kentucky College of Medicine, where he was recognized with the Outstanding Leadership and Community Service Award. Also, during medical school, Dr. Wallender completed an AO trauma fellowship at the Albert-Ludwigs University of Freiburg Clinic for Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Head and Neck Plastic Surgery in Freiburg, Germany. Dr. Wallender completed his residency in oral and maxillofacial surgery at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Wallender then completed his fellowship training in pediatric craniofacial surgery at the University of Florida in Jacksonville.

Dr. Wallender was published in the International Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and the Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. He has presented at the annual meetings of the American Academy of Craniomaxillofacial Surgeons and the Florida Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons.

Dr. Wallender has participated in multiple international medical missions to Guatemala, Vietnam, Honduras and the Philippines. He partners with multiple organizations annually to provide surgical care to children born with cleft lip and palate deformities.

Dr. Wallender is a member of the American Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Association, the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons and the Florida Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Association.

As Northwest Florida's only children's hospital, The Studer Family Children's Hospital at Sacred Heart offers an entire team especially trained to care for children, including pediatric radiologists, pediatric anesthesiologists, pediatric respiratory therapists, pediatric dietary services, pediatric social services and pediatric physical, speech and occupational therapists. The Children's Hospital also offers a medical staff of more than 120 physicians across 30 pediatric specialties.

About Sacred Heart Health System

In Florida, Ascension operates Sacred Heart Health based in Pensacola and St. Vincent's HealthCare based in Jacksonville. Together, Ascension operates seven hospitals and more than 100 other sites of care, and they employ nearly 10,000 associates. Across the region, Sacred Heart and St. Vincent's have served North Florida communities for more than 145 years. In fiscal year 2017, they provided \$168 million in community benefit and care of persons living in poverty. Ascension (www.ascension.org) is a faith-based healthcare organization dedicated to transformation through innovation across the continuum of care. As the largest non-profit health system in the U.S. and the world's largest Catholic health system, Ascension is committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable. Ascension includes approximately 165,000 associates and 34,000 aligned providers. Ascension's Healthcare Division operates more than 2,600 sites of care – including 153 hospitals and more than 50 senior living facilities – in 22 states and the District of Columbia. For more information on Sacred Heart Health System, visit www.sacred-heart.org.

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