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For Immediate Release

New program in Temple is reality check *City of Temple and Scott & White steer teens to better driving*

TEMPLE, Texas – (June 27, 2012) Looking out from inside a hospital emergency room is a cold warning for youthful offenders of traffic laws and other risky driving behavior. And spending an uncomfortable day at the hospital may be just what the judge orders. On Saturday, June 23, Scott & White Memorial Hospital-Temple became that destination.

Reality Education for Drivers, or RED for short, is a one-day, hospital-based injury prevention program created to guide teenagers ages 14-19 toward better decision making and responsible behavior when driving.

“Drivers under the age of 19 are more likely to be involved in an accident resulting in injury or death than any other single group,” said Temple’s Municipal Court Presiding Judge Kathleen Person. “This is linked to risky driving behavior. Having the ability to sentence youth to a program that will help address what could happen as a result of risky driving behavior is a critical tool for the court as well as an investment in the youth of our community.”

RED is funded through a grant from the Texas Department of Transportation, and administered by Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center in Waco, a partner hospital of the Scott & White Healthcare system. The class takes place in the hospital, and is held on the fourth Saturday of the month, lasting about six hours. Candidates for the class are high-risk drivers -- teenagers who have been ticketed for violations such as speeding or running a red light.

The program includes tours of trauma rooms, intensive care rooms, and other hospital areas where accident victims are often treated. Physical therapy staff outfit students with neck braces or wheelchairs, so they can experience first-hand how it might feel to have an accident-induced injury. A traffic accident survivor also speaks to each class.

Matt Davis, MD, director of Scott & White’s trauma program, stresses the importance of the trauma team’s participation in this program. “Supporting programs that educate the community and work to limit or eliminate traumas and injuries are part of our mission as a Level I trauma center,” he said.

For more information about the RED program, call 254.724.4967.

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