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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**John P. Murtha Neuroscience and Pain Institute to announce exciting polio partnership with Johnstown Rotary Club**

Johnstown, PA (October 13, 2008)- To mark the weeklong (October 12-18) “**We’re Still Here**” campaign, Memorial Medical Center’s John P. Murtha Neuroscience and Pain Institute (JPMNPI), which is home to the nation’s first polio registry, will hold a **celebration and media event Friday, October 17, at 11:30 a.m.**, in the Lobby of the Institute, located at 1450 Scalp Avenue.

During the event, which is in collaboration with the Post Polio Health International’s “We’re Still Here” campaign, the Institute will announce a new partnership with the Johnstown Rotary Club entitled, “Eradication to Rehabilitation,” which will establish a fund to assist with expenses related to braces and such for polio survivors.

“We are very excited about this new partnership,” says Barb Duryea, Director, Research and Development, John P. Murtha Neuroscience and Pain Institute. “I think it’s wonderful that we’ll be working with a local community service organization like the Johnstown Rotary Club to help provide much needed braces and medical equipment to those polio survivors who need it.”

Post-Polio survivors from across the region will be invited to participate in the celebration at the John P. Murtha Neuroscience and Pain Institute, where a historical Polio pictorial display, will be available for viewing. Joining the festivities will be Dr. William DeMayo, Medical Director of JPMNPI’s Polio Program, in addition to Mary Grattan, President-Elect, Johnstown Rotary Club and a polio survivor.

The weeklong “We’re Still Here” campaign, spearheaded by Post-Polio Health International (PHI), is an effort to raise public awareness about the condition, successes and contributions of Polio survivors. The World Health Organization estimates that there are 12 to 20 million Polio survivors in the world, with approximately one million of them living in the United States.

**Poliomyelitis (Polio)** or infantile paralysis is a viral infectious disease caused by poliovirus (PV), which enters the body through the mouth, infecting the intestinal lining. It may proceed to the blood stream and into the central nervous system causing muscle weakness and often paralysis. Symptoms of Post-Polio Syndrome include fatigue, new muscle weakness, joint or muscle pain and difficulty sleeping, breathing and swallowing.

Memorial Medical Center is the recipient of the HealthGrades 2008 Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence, ranking it in the top 5% in the nation for clinical outcomes.