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Catholic Health Initiatives Approves Formation of Statewide Network To Expand, Improve Health Care in Kentucky

DENVER – June 14 – Catholic Health Initiatives formally approved plans today to create a statewide health care delivery system to meet the needs of all of the people of Kentucky and beyond.

The new system will include the University of Louisville Hospital/James Graham Brown Cancer Center; Louisville-based Jewish Hospital & St. Mary's HealthCare; and Lexington-based Saint Joseph Health System.

The partnership agreement, approved by the boards of all three organizations, still must receive regulatory and Church approvals before becoming effective, which could take 12 months.

“There is so much more we can accomplish together,” said Bob Hewett, who will be the first chair of the system's community board of trustees. “Most important, we will be increasing access to basic and advanced health services. That will lead to improving the health not only of individual patients, but of entire communities.”

“At the same time, we will work to lower costs as we advocate for the poor and underserved in our communities,” added Hewett, a long-time board member of the Saint Joseph Health System, including his time as chair of its predecessor board (Saint Joseph HealthCare)..

The system will combine the faith-based and academic heritages of the partners, integrating medical research, education, technology and health care services wherever patients receive care. The network will collaborate with all health care providers, enhancing existing relationships and developing new partnerships.

One benefit of integration is the opportunity to efficiently move research from bench to bedside, improving health care outcomes, according to the partners. Plans call for expanding the academic medical center in Louisville to include the University of Louisville Hospital, James Graham Brown Cancer Center, Jewish Hospital and Frazier Rehab Institute, and extending the research and teaching programs of the University of Louisville across the state through an academic affiliation agreement with the University of Louisville School Of Medicine.



A spirit of innovation, a legacy of care.

The new system will bring together academic and community physicians, creating a medical staff of more than 3,000 physicians across the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The use of technology – especially telemedicine – will enable network physicians to expand access to specialty care that many communities have not previously had available. For example, Saint Joseph hospitals and the University of Louisville Hospital currently use telemedicine robots to provide stroke, neurology and other specialty consultations in partnership with other facilities.

The sponsors of the health system are Jewish Hospital HealthCare Services, University of Louisville and Catholic Health Initiatives, a national nonprofit health organization based in Denver, Colo. Jewish Hospital & St. Mary's HealthCare was formed in 2005 through a joint venture between Jewish Hospital HealthCare Services and Catholic Health Initiatives. Saint Joseph Health System is also part of Catholic Health Initiatives.

Plans call for Catholic Health Initiatives to make an incremental capital infusion of \$320 million in support of the system's mission and health care services statewide. In addition, the new system will invest \$200 million in capital to expand the academic medical center in Louisville and \$100 million in statewide health care services.

“We see a healthier future for the Commonwealth,” said Hewett, “by combining our efforts to address the serious health challenges faced by the people of Kentucky.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Heart Association, Kentucky ranks among the 10 states with the worst health indicators in the nation for cancer, obesity and death due to heart disease and stroke. More than half of the state is designated as medically underserved and there is a growing scarcity of physicians across Kentucky.

The network will include hospitals, clinics, specialty institutions, home health agencies, satellite primary care centers and physician groups with 91 locations combined.

Until they have received regulatory approvals, the partners will continue to operate as separate organizations.

More information, photography, video, and b-roll on the partnering organizations and updates on the system can be found at www.partnershipprogress.org.