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Sylvania Franciscan Health Signs Letter of Intent with Catholic Health Initiatives

TOLEDO, Ohio and ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (May 21, 2014) – Today Sylvania Franciscan Health (SFH) and Catholic Health Initiatives (CHI) signed a non-binding letter of intent for SFH to join CHI. The two health care systems will negotiate the terms of the sponsorship agreement with the expectation of reaching an agreement by fall 2014.

The organizations have entered into formal discussions that, if successful, would bring together two strong systems with similar missions, values and long histories of service to the communities they serve.

CHI would become the sole sponsor of Sylvania Franciscan Health, which includes Franciscan Living Communities in Kentucky and Ohio, St. Joseph Health System in the Brazos Valley region of Texas, and the Trinity Health System Region joint venture in Eastern Ohio near the West Virginia border. In this potential agreement, the Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania, Ohio, would continue to sponsor their health and human services ministries of Bethany House, Our Lady of Grace, Rosary Care Center, the Sophia Center, and Convent Park Apartments, as well as their education ministry of Lourdes University.

SFH recognizes that the health care industry is rapidly changing and faces a new model – one in which systems are expected to offer integrated systems of care for specific geographical populations. As a result many smaller health systems are joining larger systems in order to expand their care within existing regions.

SFH is in a strong position, having withstood these changes and many more throughout the past years. Integrating with CHI will allow SFH to build on the strength of its health system and better support the expanding health care needs of the communities it serves.

“We are excited about the possibility of joining CHI, whose culture and values are in alignment with those of our Sisters. After a substantial due diligence process to find a potential partner that shares our commitment to patients, as well as the mission of Catholic healthcare, we are confident CHI will enable us to continue our vision as well as the Franciscan charism that is our foundation,” said Sylvania Franciscan Health CEO Jim Pope.

Together, CHI and SFH will navigate the new era of health care and develop innovative ways to build healthier communities.

“We are pleased that Sylvania Franciscan Health wants to be part of the CHI family. SFH’s health ministries in Ohio, Texas, and Kentucky will be strengthened through their alignment with other CHI organizations. The Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania, Ohio, have created a strong foundation for Catholic health care, and our shared values merge to strengthen the delivery of highly reliable, quality care across the system,” said CHI Chief Executive Officer Kevin Lofton.

The transfer of sponsorship will require approvals from the Congregational Minister and General Council of the Sisters of St. Francis and the CHI Board of Stewardship Trustees as well as federal, state and Church authorities.

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About Sylvania Franciscan Health: Sylvania Franciscan Health is the sponsored health and human services ministry of the Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania, Ohio. With core values of Reverence, Service and Stewardship at the forefront of its mission, the ministry serves communities throughout the United States. Membership organizations, with various locations in Ohio, Texas and Kentucky, currently include seven hospitals,

seven long-term care facilities, four assisted living facilities, independent senior housing, ambulatory care centers, home health services, rehabilitation centers, a counseling center, and a long-term shelter for victims of domestic violence.

About the Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania: Founded in Sylvania, Ohio in 1916, the Sisters of St. Francis live in the spirit of Francis of Assisi as joyful servants and messengers of peace, committed to works that reverence human dignity, embrace the poor and marginalized, and respect the gift of all creation. Sponsored ministries of the Sisters of St. Francis are Lourdes University, which includes the Franciscan Theater and Conference Center, and Sylvania Franciscan Health, with hospitals, nursing homes and retirement communities in Ohio, Kentucky and Texas.

About Catholic Health Initiatives: Catholic Health Initiatives, a nonprofit, faith-based health system formed in 1996 through the consolidation of four Catholic health systems, expresses its mission each day by creating and nurturing healthy communities in the hundreds of sites across the nation where it provides care. One of the nation's largest health systems, Englewood, Colo.-based CHI operates in 18 states and comprises 89 hospitals, including four academic medical centers, and 23 critical-access facilities; community health services organizations; accredited nursing colleges; home-health agencies; and other facilities that span the inpatient and outpatient continuum of care. In fiscal year 2013, CHI provided \$762 million in charity care and community benefit, including services for the poor, free clinics, education and research.