

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Media Contact:  
Francis Onofrio, Mason, Inc.  
203.393.1101 x169  
[fonofrio@mason23.com](mailto:fonofrio@mason23.com)

**Hospital for Special Care to Receive \$3.6 Million Grant  
to Support Electronic Medical Records System for Autism Medical Home**

*System is a major step towards the first medical home for Autism care in Connecticut*

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. (March. 14, 2013) – [Hospital for Special Care](#) (HSC) announced today that it will receive a \$3.6 million capital grant-in-aid to cover the purchase and implementation of an electronic medical records system that will serve as the foundation of a patient-centered medical home (PCMH) at its [Autism Center](#).

“Autism impacts many people, and while early intervention is key, difficulties for families frequently begin when services are hard to access,” Governor Malloy said. “Hospital for Special Care, through this new electronic records system, is working to ensure that nobody falls through the cracks and that these important services are accessible here in Connecticut.”

“Because of our history in successfully treating patients with complex needs, Hospital for Special Care is uniquely positioned to provide Connecticut with a patient-centered medical home for children with autism,” said [Lynn Ricci](#), senior vice president, chief operating officer, Hospital for Special Care.

“Unfortunately, there is a lack of resources in Connecticut including disparities in access to services for Autism care, and our state needs a hub of coordination. Once established, Connecticut will be among the few states in the nation to provide such a service,” Ricci said. “We are grateful for these funds and fully appreciate the magnitude of this commitment from Governor Malloy and the state Department of Social Services. We have been working closely with the Governor and his team since the beginning of his term. The Governor’s support and dedication to autism helps to ensure we’re moving toward offering the best care for those affected by autism.”

Ricci said that all PCMHs must be accredited by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), and in order to obtain NCQA accreditation the hospital needed an electronic medical records (EMR) system to meet requirements.

Since the Autism Center at HSC opened February 2012, the hospital has assisted Connecticut families with a triage of comprehensive services in collaboration with The Center for Autism and Behavioral Studies at The University of Saint Joseph. The program has served more than 125 Connecticut children with autism, yet many more remain on a waiting list and many others had to be referred elsewhere for services. Ricci said that by expanding HSC's existing services to a PCMH model, the hospital will be able to serve more Connecticut families via a more integrated and cost-effective approach.

Patient Centered Medical Homes are consistent with both state and federal health care reform initiatives. A PCMH for Autism Spectrum Disorders also meshes with the findings of Governor Malloy's Autism Feasibility Study. What's more, there will be a natural link between this PCMH and the Bioscience Connecticut initiative and work at the Jackson Labs facility less than two miles from HSC.

The American Academy of Pediatrics describes a 'medical home' as a model of delivery of care that is accessible, continuous, comprehensive, family-centered and culturally effective. This model not only considers medical issues but addresses social, educational, transitional and housing concerns.

Children with Autism use healthcare at a higher rate with higher costs but have very limited access to the coordinated care provided by a medical home. Further, as a child with Autism gets older, fewer services are available for the transition from school-based services to adulthood.

The Autism Center at HSC offers an array of psychological, developmental and academic evaluations as well as a wide range of assessment and therapy options in the areas of occupational therapy, and speech and language therapy. Behavioral and educational planning also will be provided with the objective of including all caregivers, teachers and others involved in the life of the child to present a consistent and structured environment where the child can thrive. For more information about the Autism Center, please call 860.827.4797, or visit [www.hfsc.org](http://www.hfsc.org).

#### **About Hospital for Special Care**

Hospital for Special Care (HSC) is one of the 10 largest, free-standing long-term acute care hospitals in the United States and the nation's only long-term acute-care hospital serving adults and children. HSC is recognized for advanced care and rehabilitation in pulmonary care, acquired brain injury, medically-complex pediatrics, neuromuscular disorders (including ALS research), spinal cord injury, comprehensive heart failure as well as diagnostic, assessment and consulting services for children and adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Located in New Britain and Hartford, CT, HSC operates inpatient and outpatient facilities serving Southern New England on a not-for-profit basis. For the latest news and information, please visit [www.hfsc.org](http://www.hfsc.org), and follow us on Twitter [@HospSpecialCare](https://twitter.com/HospSpecialCare).

###