



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CONNECTICUT HEALTH FOUNDATION GRANTS \$75,000 TO
SAINT FRANCIS FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Center for Women's Health will add a Full Time Psychotherapist

(Hartford, CT – October 26, 2015) Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center today announced that it has received \$75,000 in grant funding from the Connecticut Health Foundation to provide behavioral health services for low-income expectant mothers at the *Saint Francis Center for Women's Health*.

The Connecticut Health Foundation grant will support the behavioral health portion of an "Obstetrics Home" initiative to provide comprehensive prenatal care to expectant mothers followed at the *Saint Francis Center for Women's Health*.

A full-time psychotherapist will be located on site at the *Center for Women's Health* to conduct screenings and Saint Francis' Behavioral Health Services will provide a psychiatrist for "face-to-face" consultations via telemedicine for patients who require additional consultations.

"A significant portion of the expectant women and teens who are prenatal patients at our clinic are in need of behavioral health services," said Walter Trymbulak, M.D., Ph.D, Director of the *Center for Women's Health*. "Mental health issues have the potential to adversely affect a pregnancy in numerous ways".

A Yale School of Medicine study found that women with mental health issues were 40% more likely to have a pregnancy complication (many of which ended in preterm birth), almost 50% more likely to have a non-live birth, and were nearly twice as likely to give birth to a low birthweight baby. Additional studies have shown that prenatal mental health screening and high-quality perinatal psychotherapy can result in increased rates of full-term births, reduced cases of infant mortality, and more normal birth weights.

"By scheduling appointments for behavioral health services at the same time in the same place as their other prenatal and perinatal appointments we hope to improve our pregnancy outcomes" said Dr. Trymbulak,

The “Obstetrics Home” initiative aims to ensure comprehensive integrated care throughout the pregnancy and post-partum period resulting in overall healthier outcomes for mom and baby.

“Mental health is just one part” said Dr. Trymbulak. The “Obstetrics Home” concept incorporates medical and behavioral healthcare with comprehensive social assessment/referral and dental screening in one convenient setting. Patients of the *Center for Women’s Health* can receive all of these services at the 1075 Asylum Avenue, Hartford, location. The initiative also extends to Saint Francis’ obstetrical patients at the *Burgdorf/Bank of America Health Center* on Coventry Street near the Mount Sinai Rehabilitation Hospital campus.

The *Center for Women’s Health* and the *Burgdorf Health Center* provide full service obstetric and gynecologic care to the women of Hartford and the surrounding communities. The *Center* does over 12,000 patient visits each year and cares for over 600 pregnant women each year. In serving the Saint Francis Mission the *Center* offers health and wellness programs to all women regardless of insurance status.

About Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center has been an anchor institution in north central Connecticut since 1897. Licensed for 617 beds and 65 bassinets, it is a major teaching hospital and the largest Catholic hospital in New England. Saint Francis and its other major entities - Mount Sinai Rehabilitation Hospital, the Connecticut Joint Replacement Institute, the Hoffman Heart and Vascular Institute of Connecticut, Smilow Cancer Hospital Yale-New Haven at Saint Francis, the Joyce D. and Andrew J. Mandell Center for Comprehensive Multiple Sclerosis Care and Neuroscience Research, and Saint Francis HealthCare Partners – joined Trinity Health in 2015. Johnson Memorial Medical Center, parent organization of Johnson Memorial Hospital and Home and Community Health Services, is also a Saint Francis Partner. For more information, visit www.stfranciscare.com.