



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Connecticut Hospitals Launch Test Project to Focus on  
Social Determinants of Health**

WALLINGFORD – Four Connecticut hospitals have begun testing ways to find out if patients have needs related to housing, employment, food insecurity, and transportation – factors that are not traditionally part of medical care but have significant impact on health – and refer them to appropriate resources.

The screening and referral work will be conducted at Bristol Hospital, Day Kimball Hospital, MidState Medical Center, and Saint Mary’s Hospital as part of a Connecticut Hospital Association initiative to identify ways to address the social determinants of health for hospital patients. The Connecticut Social Health Initiative project is funded by a grant from the Connecticut Health Foundation.

“Hospitals are in a unique position to assess patients’ needs at the point of care. Testing different approaches will help us learn the most effective ways hospitals can refer people to critical resources, which is the ultimate goal of the project,” said Jennifer Jackson, CEO, CHA. “We are pleased to work in collaboration with the Connecticut Health Foundation on this project.”

“We know that housing, transportation, food security, and other social factors have a big influence on patients’ health outcomes, so it’s important that identifying these needs become part of medical care,” said Tiffany Donelson, Vice President of Program at the Connecticut Health Foundation. “By testing different approaches to identifying these needs in health care settings, Connecticut hospitals will be able to determine what models are most effective and how to best incorporate them into their care.”

The information gathered will be used to determine the most effective approach to identify patient needs and connect patients to services, as well as the feasibility of applying the approach more broadly.

Social determinants of health, which comprise social, behavioral, and environmental influences, account for 60 percent of a person’s health. Genetics and healthcare comprise the other 40 percent, according to McGinnis et al., (2002). According to experts, addressing social determinants of health will result in better health outcomes and will improve population health.

McGinnis, J. M., Williams-Russo, P., & Knickman, J. R. (2002). The case for more active policy attention to health promotion. *Health Affairs* (Millwood), 21(2), 78-93.

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#### **About CHA**

The Connecticut Hospital Association has been dedicated to serving Connecticut's hospitals since 1919. Through state and federal advocacy, CHA represents the interests of Connecticut's hospitals on key healthcare issues in the areas of quality and patient safety, access and coverage, workforce, community health, health equity, and hospital reimbursement.

#### **About the Connecticut Health Foundation**

The Connecticut Health Foundation is the state's largest independent health philanthropy and is dedicated to improving lives by changing health systems. Established in 1999, the foundation's mission is to improve the health of the people of Connecticut, and it has worked to do so through innovative grantmaking, public policy research, technical assistance, and leadership development. Since 1999, the foundation has awarded grants totaling more than \$59 million in 45 cities and towns throughout the state.