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## **Saint Mary's Hospital To Eliminate Use of Plastic Drinking Straws**

**WATERBURY, Conn. (March 19, 2019)** According to the Plastic Pollution Coalition, plastic drinking straws are one of the most harmful plastic products in use and that most of them cannot be easily recycled.

Currently, Trinity Health purchases more than 23 million plastic straws annually and half of them are used in our retail operations across the country. As part of our journey to promote sustainable environmental practices, Trinity Health will begin phasing out the use of plastic drinking straws and coffee stirrers in our retail food service outlets across our Ministry.

Beginning on March 25, Saint Mary's Hospital cafeterias and coffee shops will offer biodegradable straws for purchase and provide biodegradable coffee stirrers. To help eliminate the need for drinking straws, lids designed for sipping will be offered to all customers, and wood stirrers and paper straws will be made available upon request. Bendable drinking straws will continue to be provided for patient use.

Trinity Health has a target to fully transition plastic stirrers and straws out of our retail operations across its Ministries by May 2019.

We are called to be good stewards of the earth and our Ministry is continually seeking ways to improve our sustainability initiatives to promote healthier, cleaner communities.

There is currently a multinational drive to end harmful plastic pollution, including an effort to eliminate single-use plastics. Trinity Health is proud to be part of this global movement.

**About Saint Mary's Hospital**

Saint Mary's Hospital is a Catholic, not-for-profit, acute care, community teaching hospital that has served Greater Waterbury since 1909. In 2016, Saint Mary's Hospital became part of Trinity Health Of New England, an integrated health care delivery system that is a member of Trinity Health, Livonia, Michigan, one of the largest multi-institutional Catholic health care delivery systems in the nation serving communities in 22 states. Licensed for 347 beds, Saint Mary's is designated as a Level II Trauma Center, offers award-winning cardiac and stroke care and houses the region's only pediatric emergency care unit. As the leading provider of surgical services in Greater Waterbury, Saint Mary's was the first to introduce the daVinci® Robotic Surgery System. The hospital's satellites and affiliates extend from Waterbury to Wolcott, Cheshire, Naugatuck, Southbury, Prospect and Watertown. Visit [stmh.org](http://stmh.org) for more information and follow us on Facebook at SaintMarysHospitalCT, Instagram and Twitter at @SaintMarysCT.