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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Capital Region Gun Buyback Program Enters 13th Year

Program seeks to reduce the number of unwanted and unsecured firearms in homes.

HARTFORD, Conn. (October 15, 2021) - For the thirteenth consecutive year, Connecticut Children's, Saint Francis Hospital, and Hartford Hospital are collaborating with the City of Hartford, Hartford Police Department, the Hartford State's Attorney Office, and several other community partners in order to lower the number of unwanted and unsecured guns in homes in the greater Hartford region by hosting the Capital Region Gun Buyback Program. This year, the Buyback Program has extended statewide, as several cities and communities across the state have collaborated to hold their events on the same day. Along with the Newtown Action Alliance Foundation, the Ethan Miller Song Foundation, CT Violence Intervention Program, and others, the Statewide Gun Buyback and Gun Safe Giveaway Day will take place on Saturday, October 16.

In Hartford, this year's Gun Buyback Program will be held from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the Hartford Department of Public Works located at 50 Jennings Road, Hartford, CT. Attendees can remain anonymous, with no ID required, and no questions asked. A limited number of free biometric gun safes will also be distributed.

Masks will be required for all attendees and the event will follow social distancing guidelines. The goal of the event is to reduce the number of firearm-related injuries locally and regionally.

"Every unsecured or unwanted firearm poses a risk to those who encounter it. Firearm injuries are the most devastating injuries we see, and the injuries go beyond the body, affecting every person in that person's life," said David S. Shapiro, M.D., Trauma Surgeon, Chief Quality Officer, Chief of Critical Care, and Vice Chair of the Department of Surgery, Saint Francis Hospital. "We have seen an increase in gun violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, not just in Hartford, but across the country. Saint Francis supports continued education about safe handling and storage of firearms. By providing an outlet for

unwanted guns, the Gun Buyback and Firearm Safety Program falls directly in line with our year-round injury prevention efforts. Suicide accounts for more than half of all firearm deaths in the United States. Reducing lethal means in the home is imperative, which is the main objective of the Buyback Program.”

“Hartford’s trauma centers, including Connecticut Children’s, have seen an increase in gun violence this year,” said Brendan Campbell, M.D., MPH, who runs the Pediatric Trauma Program at Connecticut Children’s. “This statewide gun buyback effort gives Connecticut residents an opportunity to make Connecticut a safer place to live by removing unwanted guns from homes.”

“COVID-19 has had an alarming impact on gun violence and this program will certainly save lives,” said Jonathan Gates, M.D., Chief of Surgery, Hartford Hospital. “Safer communities depend on getting deadly weapons out of homes, preventing tragedies that change lives forever.”

Everyone who turns in a working gun will receive a gift card while supplies last. Gift cards range from \$200 for assault weapons, to \$100 for handguns or revolvers, to \$50 for rifles and shotguns, to \$25 for handguns and any type of black powder gun. Guns must be unloaded and placed in a clear plastic bag, and inside a paper bag or box. Non-operable guns, BB guns, and ammunition are welcome, but no gift cards will be exchanged for these items.

All guns received at the event are destroyed unless forensic testing confirms they have been used in the commission of a crime. Non-working guns, black-powder weapons, BB guns, flare guns, and ammunition can also be turned in; however, they may not be eligible for a gift card.

Over the past 12 years, more than 1,475 firearms have been collected during this initiative. Each year more than 33,000 people die from firearm injuries in the United States. According to the most recent City of Hartford Compstat report, there have been 139 shooting incidents in Hartford this year, a decrease of 19% from 2020.

About Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, a Level 1 Trauma Center, has been an anchor institution in Connecticut since 1897. In 2015, Saint Francis became part of Trinity Health Of New England, a member of Trinity Health, one of the largest multi-institutional Catholic health care delivery systems in the nation. Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center is licensed for 617 beds, is a major teaching hospital and the largest Catholic hospital in New England. Other Saint Francis entities include the Comprehensive Women’s Health Center, the Connecticut Joint Replacement Institute, the Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity, the Hoffman Heart and Vascular Institute of Connecticut, the Smilow Cancer Hospital Yale-New Haven at Saint Francis, and Trinity Health Of New England Medical Group. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @SaintFrancisCT

About Connecticut Children’s

[Connecticut Children’s](#) is the only hospital in Connecticut dedicated exclusively to the care of children and ranked one of the best children’s hospitals in the nation by U.S. News & World Report and a Magnet® designated hospital. Connecticut Children’s provides more than 30 pediatric specialties along

with community-based programs to uniquely care for the physical, social, and emotional needs of children. Our team of pediatric experts and care coordinators bring access to breakthrough research, advanced treatments for both rare and common diseases, and innovative health and safety programs to every child. Connecticut Children's is a not-for-profit organization with a mission to improve access to healthcare for all children through convenient locations, care alliances and partnerships.

About Hartford Hospital

With 30,000 colleagues and total operating revenue of \$4.3 billion, **Hartford HealthCare** has cultivated a strong, unified culture of accountability and innovation. Its care-delivery system, with more than 360 locations serving 185 towns and cities, includes two tertiary-level teaching hospitals, an acute-care community teaching hospital, an acute-care hospital and trauma center, three community hospitals, the state's most extensive behavioral health network, a large multispecialty physician group, a clinical care organization, a regional home care system, an array of senior care services, and a large physical therapy and rehabilitation network. Hartford HealthCare's unique, system-wide Institute Model offers a single, high standard of care in crucial specialties at hospital and ambulatory sites across Connecticut. The institutes include: Cancer, Heart and Vascular, Ayer Neuroscience, Orthopedics and Tallwood Urology. Visit Hartford HealthCare at www.hartfordhealthcare.org

