

**SAINT FRANCIS RECEIVES ITS LARGEST GRANT IN HISTORY FROM
W.K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION FOR BREASTFEEDING PROGRAM**

\$2,082,631 to expand the Breastfeeding Peer Counseling program in Hartford and beyond.

(Hartford, Conn –March 14, 2018) - Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, a member of Trinity Health Of New England, has received a \$2,082,631 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) to continue the Hispanic Health Council's "Breastfeeding: Heritage and Pride" (BHP) peer counseling program in the hospital's Center for Women's Health. The grant will be used to replicate and introduce the BHP program in three other Trinity Health Of New England hospitals (Johnson Memorial Hospital in Stafford Springs, Conn, Mercy Medical Center in Springfield, Mass, and Saint Mary's Hospital in Waterbury, Conn). It will also be used to create a path for the replication of BHP at 36 other Trinity Health hospitals and to assist in Trinity Health's goal of having 100% of its maternity hospitals reach Baby Friendly status over the next three years.

This new initiative, "Scaling Up the Baby Friendly Hospital Systems/Breastfeeding: Heritage and Pride" will be spearheaded by Walter Trymbulak, M.D., Ph.D, Vice Chairman, Saint Francis' Women and Infants Service Line and Project Director of the Kellogg initiatives. He is thrilled with the continued support of WKKF because "Breast milk is the very best first food an infant can get. Breastfeeding has significant health benefits for both our babies and their mothers. More importantly, these health benefits last for a lifetime." "Baby Friendly" is a designation given to hospitals by UNICEF's Baby Friendly U.S.A. Hospital maternity units need to establish strict standards of practice that increase the rate of breastfeeding initiation and maximize the emotional bond between mothers and infants in the first two days following delivery.

BHP is an evidenced-based program that seeks to increase breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity rates among low-income mothers. Created by the Hispanic Health Council nearly 20 years ago, it is the only program in the country that recruits women from the community who have successfully breastfed and trains them to counsel and educate their peers and provide hands-on support in clinical and community settings.

José Ortiz, Executive Director of the Hispanic Health Council states, "I am delighted that our Breastfeeding Heritage and Pride Program will have increased impact, as it is proven to increase breastfeeding rates among populations that experience the greatest barriers to successful breastfeeding."

"The BHP program began at Saint Francis in 2015 with the support of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. We are incredibly grateful to the WKKF for recognizing the success of this program and enabling us to continue to care for the most vulnerable in our community," stated John F. Rodis, M.D., M.B.A, president, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center.

"The Saint Francis Foundation is honored to be part of this historic grant that will impact the children and families of our local community and eventually throughout the nation. These partnerships are the basis of our mission to honor the dignity of every person," stated Lynn Rossini, vice president and chief development officer, Saint Francis Foundation.

##

About Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center has been an anchor institution in north central 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 The Hispanic Health Council

The Hispanic Health Council (HHC) is a nationally recognized community-based organization that operates statewide in Connecticut. HHC works to improve the health and social well-being of Latinos and other diverse communities through community-based research, evidence-based direct services, provider training and policy advocacy. Since its inception, the organization has developed, evaluated, replicated and disseminated community health worker models to support health promotion and chronic disease management. Breastfeeding: Heritage and Pride Program is one of these models. HHC also has decades of experience developing and utilizing successful techniques for engagement of high-risk, hard to reach populations, and culturally relevant educational materials and social marketing campaigns targeting individuals and communities with low health literacy. HHC serves over 20,000 individuals across the state. For more information, visit www.hispanichealth.com.

About the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal pioneer Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work, and life. The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Michigan, and works throughout the United State and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special emphasis is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico, and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit www.wkkf.org.