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**SAINT FRANCIS HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CENTER TO LEAD INITIATIVE TO  
TRANSFORM HEALTH OUTCOMES IN HARTFORD**

*Well Being 360 programs to address health disparities*

(HARTFORD, Conn. – Nov. 4, 2016) Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, through the Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity, today launched a far-reaching Transforming Communities Initiative that will unite health care systems, community groups and development agencies to address health disparities in Hartford’s North End.

The Transforming Communities Initiative will bring together Saint Francis, the City of Hartford and Community Solutions to develop programs and strategies aimed at reducing obesity, promoting tobacco-free living, and addressing social determinants that impact current and future health outcomes for the people of the North End of Hartford – one of the city’s poorest neighborhoods.

“Day in and day out we strive to improve the health of our patients and their families from the care they receive in our hospitals to providing access to programs in the community that help people lead healthier lives,” said Saint Francis President John F. Rodis, M.D., M.B.A. “This people-centered initiative strikes at the heart of the Saint Francis Mission to serve as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within the community. This work will improve health outcomes and deepen the relationships we have as a healthcare system with those living in our community.”

Saint Francis is the second Trinity Health – New England provider to be chosen to be part of a larger Transforming Communities Initiative launched by its parent Trinity Health based in Livonia, Michigan, earlier this year. The first six participants announced in April included Mercy Medical Center in Springfield, also a member of Trinity Health - New England. Over the next five years, Trinity Health will invest approximately \$80 million in grants, loans, community match dollars and services in those communities.

"I'm grateful to Saint Francis and Trinity Health for choosing Hartford as the newest partner in the Transforming Communities Initiative," stated Mayor of Hartford Luke Bronin. "This creative, community-oriented partnership, backed with a generous commitment of resources, has the potential to make a real difference in improving health and quality of life for our residents. We look forward to working closely with Saint Francis and Community Solutions to achieve the goal of a healthier Hartford."

"The health and well-being of our residents is a priority. As such, we are honored that Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, which has always been a valued partner in improving

health in the city, has launched this innovative program to strengthen our community and transform the city,” said Gary Rhule, M.D., M.P.H., director, Hartford Health and Human Services. “I feel fairly confident to say that this is what our residents have always asked of us: to create innovative programs and initiatives that are responsive to their needs; engages them in a meaningful way; and builds on a long-lasting and sustainable foundation.”

According to a Community Health Needs Assessment Report, the rate of obesity in Hartford is 33 percent, comparable to that of the state of Alabama. In contrast, the state of Connecticut is ranked 43rd for overall obesity rates.

In Connecticut, over 8% of adults are diagnosed with diabetes – in Hartford the rate is 12% of adults. And, 16% of youth and adults in Connecticut are smokers.

"We tend to think of hospitals when we think of health, but most of what makes us healthy or not is dictated by our lives outside the hospital," said Rick Brush, Hartford director for Community Solutions. "Quality housing, healthy food access, job opportunities— these are the things that drive health and help keep us out of the hospital in the first place. Saint Francis and the entire Trinity Health system are ahead of the curve in recognizing that healthy people depend on healthy communities. We are thrilled to partner with them to help residents of the North End positively transform their health outcomes."

Community Solutions will help ensure alignment among multiple efforts and partners and measure progress toward neighborhood health goals in the community. Working together with Saint Francis, the City of Hartford and others, the organization will identify community needs and invite partners to launch or expand programs that address key issues like healthy food access and affordability.

Working together these community partners will address socioeconomic factors, health behaviors, clinical care and the physical environment to transform the North Hartford Promise Zone into a healthy, vibrant community.

"We are delighted to be providing Saint Francis and Well Being 360 with this support," said Jaime Dirksen, director, Community Health Institute, Trinity Health. "Saint Francis and its partners have a strategic collaboration and shared commitment to improving people's lives. It's a great investment."

The role of the Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity team will be to coordinate the work groups; develop and implement a reporting structure and facilitate technical assistance as needed. Expertise and commitment from community partners is critical to the success of the project.

### **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 - New England, an integrated health care delivery system that is a member of Trinity Health, Livonia, MI, 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 and 65 bassinets, is a major teaching hospital and the largest Catholic hospital in New England. Other Saint Francis entities include the Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity, the Comprehensive Women’s Health Center, the Connecticut Joint Replacement Institute, the Hoffman Heart and Vascular Institute of Connecticut, Smilow Cancer Hospital Yale-New Haven at Saint Francis, and Saint Francis Medical Group.