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St. John's Healthcare Foundation CEO Challenge Raises Nearly \$175,000 to Benefit Behavioral Health Services in Ventura County

New Crisis Stabilization Unit will provide emergency mental health care

OXNARD, CA – April 14, 2021 – The St. John's Healthcare Foundation, a member of Dignity Health, is pleased to announce that its "CEO Challenge for Behavioral Health" raised nearly \$175,000 to benefit program services and create a new Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) in Ventura County.

To raise funds, Lloyd H. Dean, CEO of CommonSpirit Health and Darren W. Lee, President and CEO of St. John's Pleasant Valley Hospital and St. John's Regional Medical Center, competed to complete the most sit-ups in ten minutes. Dean claimed victory with 740 sit-ups while Lee completed 443 sit-ups.

"Access to behavioral health services continues to be a growing health equity problem in the United States and our community," says Darren W. Lee, President and CEO for St. John's Pleasant Valley Hospital and St. John's Regional Medical Center. "The funds raised from this competition will help us reach our goal of building a Crisis Stabilization Unit where we can promptly provide emergency mental health care for individuals experiencing an acute psychiatric crisis."

National standards for care recommend that a minimum of 50 inpatient mental health beds serve every 100,000 people; currently, Ventura County has only 10 for every 100,000 people. The need to expand access and services is immense and crosses all socioeconomic boundaries and age groups. One in five adults is living with mental illness, with one in 25 adults experiencing severe or acute mental illnesses.

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“The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a rapid increase in mental health conditions across all age groups in Ventura County,” says Robert Streeter, MD, Chief Medical Officer at St. John’s Regional Medical Center. “St. John’s new Crisis Stabilization Unit is important because it provides individualized behavioral health services locally to meet this urgent need of our community.”

A CSU in the community will reduce the hours/days that a patient suffering from an acute psychiatric crisis would otherwise spend in the Emergency Department waiting to transfer to an out-of-county inpatient mental health facility. The CSU will see patients as soon as they are medically cleared, providing early treatment initiation, resulting in less need for out-of-town transfers for inpatient mental health care.

To learn more about the CEO Challenge and the Crisis Stabilization Unit, please visit SupportStJohns.org/behavioral-health.

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About Dignity Health St. John’s Regional Medical Center

St. John’s Regional Medical Center is a 265-bed acute care, award-winning facility. Serving Ventura County for more than one hundred years, St. John’s is the first and only Certified Thrombectomy-Capable Stroke Center in Ventura County and a recipient of the American Heart Association’s, Get with the Guidelines-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award. Designated as a STEMI Receiving Center, St. John’s is highly recognized in the community for excellence in cardiac care. Our Cancer Center is accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer, and our Integrated Breast Center is accredited by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers. SJRMCM houses a comprehensive Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, providing specialized care to the tiniest patients as well as a Beacon Award-Winning Intensive Care Unit. Each hospital is supported by an active philanthropic Foundation to help meet the growing health care needs of our communities. Learn more at dignityhealth.org/stjohnsregional.