

October 2, 2019**Immediate Release****Contact:** JoAnn Cavanaugh, Director Public Relations**Office:** (716) 706-2061 | **Cell:** (716) 228-4886 | **Email:** icav@chsbuffalo.org

Catholic Health Opens LIFE Villa – A New Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly Center in Cheektowaga

For many seniors, there's no place like home. But for some, with ongoing medical needs, living on their own can be a challenge. Today, there is another option to traditional nursing home care that provides all the medical and support services elderly individuals may need to remain in their own homes.

Expanding on the success of its LIFE (Living Independently for Elders) program, which has been serving the long term care needs of Erie County residents for nearly a decade at the OLV Senior Neighborhood in Lackawanna, Catholic Health is pleased to announce the opening of LIFE Villa. LIFE Villa is a state and federally funded Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) center, which provides a wide range of services in seniors' homes, as well as in the newly remodeled "LIFE Center" at 600 Doat Street on the Villa Maria Campus in Cheektowaga.

"For many elderly individuals and their families, LIFE Villa is an alternative to nursing home care," said John Beyer, President & CEO of Catholic Health LIFE. "Our goal is to keep seniors in their own homes for as long as possible, providing all the care and services they need to live safely and independently."

The LIFE Villa center occupies the entire first floor and part of the second floor of the Felician Sisters' historic St. Francis Building on the Villa campus, which is also home to the Sisters' Immaculate Heart of Mary Convent. In addition to serving the needs of area seniors throughout Erie County, LIFE Villa will also provide services for members of the Felician Sisters congregation who qualify for the program.

"The LIFE/PACE program at Villa Maria is a blessing for our Felician Sisters," said Sr. Paul Marie Baczkowski, CSSF, Local Minister of the Felician Sisters. "The program helps us continue to promote our values of care and compassion in our neighborhood as we serve the sick and elderly."

Work has been underway for the past year on the \$4.7 million renovation project to transform vacant space in St. Francis Hall into the bright, modern LIFE Villa center. The center houses a professionally staffed medical clinic; two spacious adult day centers, providing meals and social activities; a specially equipped area for personal care services; and administrative offices.

Medical services offered through LIFE include all inpatient and outpatient medical care, rehabilitation care, nutrition services, home health care, dental care, mental health services, eye care, podiatry, prescription drug management, and social work services. Transportation is also provided to and from all medical appointments and visits to the LIFE Villa center.

Being located on a college campus provides a unique setting for a senior care program like LIFE Villa, including special learning opportunities for students enrolled in Villa Maria College's occupational and physical therapy assistant degree programs, as well those studying visual and performing arts, who may want to work with the elderly providing art and music based therapy programs.

"Villa Maria College is pleased to welcome the Catholic Health LIFE program to our vibrant campus," said College President Dr. Matthew Giordano. "The missions' of the Felician Sisters, Catholic Health LIFE and Villa Maria College align nicely, all seeking to impact the lives of others and provide value to the community."

Participation in LIFE Villa is open Erie County residents age 55 or older who qualify for long term care but can have their needs safely met at home and in the LIFE Villa day center. The cost of the program is covered by Medicare and/or Medicaid. Private pay options are also available.

"As people continue to live longer, the need for programs and services to care for this aging population in our community continues to grow," said Joyce Markiewicz, Chief Business Development Officer for Catholic Health. "Our health system was the first local provider to bring the PACE care model to Erie County and we are pleased to be able to expand these services to LIFE Villa in Cheektowaga to make this much needed care more convenient and accessible for area seniors and their families."

Catholic Health is accepting applications for LIFE Villa. For more information, or to schedule a tour of the LIFE Villa day center, call 819-LIFE (5433) or visit www.chsbuffalo.org/LIFE.