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For Immediate Release

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Catholic Health Converts Former Nursing Home Into Western New York's First COVID-19 Post-Acute Center

St. Joseph Post-Acute Center in Orchard Park Set to Open Tuesday

Catholic Health continues to build on its “COVID-19 Continuum” by partnering with the McGuire Group to reopen the former AbsolutCare Nursing Home in Orchard Park and convert it into a dedicated COVID-19 continuing care facility. Working closely in partnership with the New York State Department of Health, Catholic Health received plan approval in less than 24 hours, paving the way for Catholic Health to open the **St. Joseph Post-Acute Center** at 4659 Duerr Road on April 14. The first facility of its kind in Western New York, the center will offer short term rehabilitation and skilled nursing care for COVID-19 patients who are discharged from Catholic Health hospitals but unable to return safely home or to other community based living facilities.

“As we began planning for the Governor’s call to action to prepare for the COVID-19 acute care surge in Western New York, we asked ourselves, ‘where will people go who no longer need hospital care, but may not be able to be discharged home or back to a long-term care facility,’” said Mark A. Sullivan, President & CEO of Catholic Health. “The St. Joseph Post-Acute Center will fill some of those gaps and free up our hospital beds for the surge in COVID-19 patients we expect to see over the next several weeks. We are grateful for the guidance and collaboration we received from the Department of Health in recognizing the urgent need for a facility of this kind and for fast-tracking our request.”

The concept for a dedicated post-acute care center to meet the need of patients recovering from the Coronavirus, follows on the heels of Catholic Health opening New York State’s only dedicated inpatient COVID-19 Treatment Facility at St. Joseph Campus in Cheektowaga on March 26.

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Catholic Health signed a lease with AbsolutCare for the 40,000 square-foot Orchard Park facility, which closed in 2019, while the McGuire Group will manage the day-to-day operations of the site. “From conception to completion, we were able to renovate and equip this facility to meet our high standards in less than two weeks,” Sullivan added. “This is a testament to our entire team working on this project and the incredible support we received from our partners at the McGuire Group. Working with a team like McGuire, who shares our commitment to 5-star nursing home care, ensures patients will receive the highest quality care during their stay at our Post-Acute Center.”

“We are happy to join forces with Catholic Health on this critically important project, which will provide the best care to this patient population, while easing the strain on the system’s hospitals so they can continue to meet the emergent medical needs of patients throughout Western New York,” said Steve Mercurio, President of the McGuire Group. “We’ve recruited a top team of doctors, nurses, physician assistants, therapists, and support staff from the McGuire Group, Catholic Health, and the local community, who are committed to helping patients recover from COVID-19 and return to their home settings.”

Catholic Health has modeled the Post-Acute Center after the St. Joseph Campus Treatment Facility, including providing all required PPE and following special safety measures. Along with separate entrances for patients and staff, the center will utilize unique red, yellow and green safety zones, which separate restricted areas requiring PPE, from unrestricted areas, which do not. The center has its own entrance road, which provides further separation from other buildings on or near the campus.

“The lessons we learned from our COVID-19 Treatment Center at St. Joseph Campus were invaluable,” Sullivan said. “From their unique safety zone system to the clinical best practices they’ve developed, we are indebted to the team throughout Catholic Health and St. Joseph Campus for their forward thinking. By creating this ‘continuum of care’ for COVID-19 patients, we are able to care for more patients across our community in the very best settings to meet their healthcare needs.”

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Located in Buffalo, NY, Catholic Health is one of Western New York’s largest healthcare systems serving thousands of patients and residents across its network of hospitals, skilled nursing and subacute care facilities, primary care centers, diagnostic & treatment centers, behavioral health services and home & community based care agencies. With 9,000 associates and 1,500 physicians, our continuum of care extends to more than 60 access points in Erie and Niagara counties.