

**May 28, 2020****Immediate Release****Contact:** JoAnn Cavanaugh, Director Public Relations**Office:** (716) 706-2061 | **Cell:** (716) 228-4886 | **Email:** [jcav@chsbuffalo.org](mailto:jcav@chsbuffalo.org)

## **NYS Department of Health Finds No Deficiencies at Three Catholic Health Long Term Care Facilities**

The New York State Department of Health (DOH) has been conducting COVID-19 infection control and general operations surveys of nursing homes across the state. After more than 48 hours of intensive on-site reviews that are part of the DOH survey process, Catholic Health's Father Baker Manor in Orchard Park, McAuley Residence in Tonawanda and St. Catherine Labouré Health Care Center in Buffalo received no deficiencies and met all state and federal infection control requirements. These findings support the facilities' five star-ratings by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services – the highest benchmark in nursing home quality.

"This is remarkable, given the intense pressure to closely scrutinize nursing home operations during this COVID crisis," said Mark A. Sullivan, President & CEO of Catholic Health. "Our quick response, coupled with the expansive internal testing of patients, residents and staff, is a best practice model cited by the state that is now being replicated by other facilities across New York."

During the individual surveys conducted over the past month at the three sites, the DOH looked at staffing, floor plans, census, infection control policies, family communications, screening practices and testing protocols. They also toured the facilities, and spoke with members of Catholic Health's Infection Control team, facility site administrative and nursing leadership, and clinical and support staff.

"During the site visits, the Department of Health surveyors were impressed with our progressive infection control practices, including our safety zone system, and our testing protocols, which went beyond what was required," Sullivan added. "I believe our integrity and transparency in communicating with families and the public also set Catholic Health apart, going into the survey."

In April, Catholic Health also created an innovative care model with the opening of the St. Joseph Post-Acute Center in Orchard Park, the area's first dedicated subacute and long term care facility for COVID-19 patients who cannot immediately return to their home, long term care facility or other community-based care setting. This site was also surveyed and received no deficiencies.

"I want to thank the leadership teams and staff at all our facilities for their tireless efforts to meet the needs of our patients, residents and their families," Sullivan continued. "We are fortunate to have such compassionate and dedicated associates, who treat the individuals they care for like family, including mourning the passing of those we lost to this terrible virus."

Catholic Health's remaining long term care facility, Mercy Nursing Facility at OLV, has not yet been surveyed. "We know this virus preys on the elderly, so I am especially proud of our Long Term Care team for their courage, stamina and unrelenting care of our residents in the face of much public misinformation," Sullivan said. "We continue to educate the community on our comprehensive testing model and the transparency of our reporting. Only when other providers reach this level of testing, will we fully understand this multi-dimensional issue and see the true effects of this pandemic on nursing homes across Western New York."