



2122 Health Drive
Suite 100
Wyoming, MI 49519
www.pennanthealthalliance.org
ph: 616-252-6800
fx: 616-252-6066

Contacts:
Metro Health:
Ellen Bristol, 616-252-5033

Trinity Health - West Michigan:
Micki Benz, 616-685-1890

University of Michigan Health System:
Kara Gavin, 734-764-2220

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pennant Health Alliance Formed to Support Local Independent Providers

Grand Rapids, Mich., Sept. 22 – In a move designed to strengthen independent community hospitals and physician practices, Metro Health, Trinity Health and University of Michigan Health System have joined to launch Pennant Health Alliance.

The new support-services network was unveiled this morning by the sponsoring organizations. The alliance initially will offer clinical support and administrative services in four key areas: physician alignment and recruitment, health information technology, revenue cycle management, and group purchasing. Other customized services, such as quality consulting and performance reporting, will be available on an as-requested basis.

Trinity Health's West Michigan hospitals are part of the group, including Mercy Health Partners in Muskegon, Saint Mary's Health Care in Grand Rapids, Battle Creek Health System, Mercy Hospital – Cadillac and Mercy Hospital – Grayling.

The announcement represents the culmination of months of discussion geared toward offering independent community providers a new option for business and clinical support in the region. The final approval was received just days ago, with the unanimous vote of the University of Michigan Health Corporation board.

Mike Faas, president and CEO of Metro Health, will serve as Chief Executive Officer for Pennant Health Alliance. The organization is now introducing itself to the region and is actively collaborating with providers seeking a network model focused on strengthening local health care while supporting independence.

"We firmly believe that the best health care starts local and stays local," Faas said. "Pennant Health Alliance offers significant operational, quality and financial benefits without loss of control or ownership. We feel that Pennant Health Alliance will resonate with doctors and hospitals who want to practice good medicine on their own terms."

Pennant Health Alliance presents a unique model that independent hospital leaders and physicians have helped to craft through conversations and feedback, one that offers significant enhancements to existing provider networks.

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Amid national health care reform and the region's aging population, Pennant Health Alliance will work to increase patient access to local primary and specialty care, while helping to improve the quality of health care and reduce operating and technology costs for hospitals and physician practices. Unmatched skill and scale will be leveraged to deliver services, and the alliance's key differentiator will be an ability to customize local solutions.

Pennant Health is backed by the substantial resources and community hospital operations knowledge of Trinity Health, the nation's 10th largest health system, and the University of Michigan Health System, whose specialty clinical programs are routinely recognized among the nation's best.

"Pennant Health Alliance allows community hospitals in the region a chance to alleviate the operational demands of back-office services by accessing the scale and benefits of our larger network," said Roger Spoelman, president and CEO of Mercy Health Partners and West Michigan regional executive for Trinity Health. "We know how hard it can be for smaller hospitals to compete effectively. Trinity Health's track record in developing successful rural health networks demonstrates our ability to assist communities while respecting local independence."

Added Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D, CEO of University of Michigan Health System: "Pennant Health Alliance will deliver access to advanced specialty care through technology integration, clinical care coordination and local program development. Patients will gain the clinical expertise of the University of Michigan Health System without necessarily having to travel to Ann Arbor. By integrating care across the continuum, we will tend to patients' needs in the most appropriate setting and as close to home as possible."

Hospitals and physician practices can join Pennant Health Alliance through a Support Services agreement. Services may be purchased through a fee-for-service arrangement or through joint ventures and contractual arrangements with Pennant Health Alliance.

For more information on Pennant Health, visit www.pennanthealthalliance.org. Providers wishing to discuss options for affiliation may contact Mike Faas, CEO, at 616-252-5222 or faasm@pennanthealthalliance.org, or Mary Boyd, Chief Operating Officer, at 231-672-6126 or boydm@pennanthealthalliance.org.

About Metro Health

Metro Health is a regional health-care organization with a 208-bed general acute care osteopathic teaching hospital and 12 neighborhood outpatient centers, serving more than 130,000 patients in Kent and surrounding counties. Metro, which earned status as a Top 100 Hospital for the three consecutive years, offers a broad range of services, including hospital inpatient and outpatient services, emergency, surgery, intensive care and rehabilitation. Physician, therapy and diagnostic services are offered in its 12 neighborhood centers. Metro's work is supported by the Metro Health Hospital Foundation, which is a charitable organization dedicated to improving the health and well being of the West Michigan community through philanthropy. For more information, visit www.metrohealth.net.

About University of Michigan Health System

The University of Michigan Health System includes the U-M Hospitals & Health Centers, which comprises three hospitals and dozens of outpatient health centers and clinics; the U-M Medical School with its Faculty Group Practice and extensive research and education programs; the clinical operations of the U-M School of Nursing; and the Michigan Health Corp. UMHC has been recognized numerous times on a national level for excellence and quality in patient care across a broad range of adult and pediatric specialties. The U-M Medical School is one of the nation's biomedical research powerhouses, with total research funding of more than \$420 million, and consistently achieves high rankings for excellence in the education and training of physicians and biomedical scientists. For more on UMHS, see www.med.umich.edu.

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About Trinity Health

Trinity Health is the 10th largest (fourth largest Catholic) health care system in the country based on net patient revenue. Headquartered in Novi, Mich., Trinity Health operates 47 acute-care hospitals, 379 outpatient facilities, 33 long-term care facilities, and numerous home health offices and hospice programs in eight states. Trinity Health is ranked in the top 10 of Thomson Reuter's "100 Top Health Systems" for clinical quality and patient safety. Employing 45,800 full-time staff and more than 8,000 active physicians, Trinity Health reported \$7.0 billion in unrestricted revenue and \$400 million in community benefit programs in fiscal year 2009. For more information about Trinity Health, visit www.trinity-health.org.

Trinity Health organizations in west and northern Michigan

- Mercy Health Partners, www.mercy-healthpartners.org
- Saint Mary's Health Care, www.smhealthcare.org
- Battle Creek Health System, www.bchealth.com
- Mercy Hospital – Cadillac <http://mercycadillac.munsonhealthcare.org/>
- Mercy Hospital – Grayling <http://mercygrayling.munsonhealthcare.org/>

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