



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

North Country Community Health Board, a Healthy Families America Site, Accredited for Quality Service by Prevent Child Abuse America

Leading National Child Abuse Prevention Organization Accredits CHI St. Joseph's Health site in Park Rapids, MN to Serve Families

PARK RAPIDS, MN November 21, 2016) – Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America) announced today that the Healthy Families America (HFA) affiliate, the Healthy Families Program through the North Country Community Health Board has been accredited as a provider of high quality home visiting services to families who want to improve their child's health, nutrition and developmental outcomes. CHI St. Joseph's Health offers the accredited home visiting program through their Community Health department.

HFA is a signature program of PCA America that has been providing home visiting services for more than 20 years. Expectant and new parents have common questions about their child's development. HFA connects with families through community partners like hospitals and pediatricians to find the answers to their questions, meeting within the familiarity and convenience of the family's own home. HFA is an accessible, voluntary and well received service.

"The American Dream starts with a happy, healthy childhood," said Dan Duffy, President and CEO of PCA America. "As parents, we all have questions from time to time. Our HFA professionals offer evidence-based best practices to provide answers to questions, individualized support when needed most, and linkages to community services. As we congratulate North Country Community Health Board we also recognize the state and community leadership that has contributed to success for CHI St. Joseph's Health."

The accreditation process is based upon a stringent set of 12 critical elements grounded in more than 30 years of research. The process involves an in-depth examination of the site's operation, as well as, the quality of the visits made by HFA home visitors.

"We commend the North Country Community Health Board for opening itself up to such an intensive review process," said Cydney Wessel, National Director of HFA. "We

believe that all families and all communities deserve access to quality home visiting services.”

The HFA site in Park Rapids is located in CHI St. Joseph’s Health Community Health building at 1415 1st ST E.

“We are very excited to be serving families as a fully accredited site. It was a lot of hard work but we have an amazing team that really care about the quality of service our families receive” says Amy Morris, CHI St. Joseph’s Health Community Health Healthy Families, Happy Homes Coordinator, and North Country Community Health Board Coordinator. Healthy Families North Country Community Health Board is a true collaborative effort between many agencies in the service area. Healthy Families North Country Community Health Board is a program of Hubbard, Beltrami, Clearwater, and Lake of the Woods counties.

Home visitors in each community receive extensive training in a wide range of areas that can cause stress and worry to just about every new parent: caring for a new baby, ensuring the baby is receiving the nutrition needed, promoting healthy child development and coping with a myriad of other potential stresses, such as financial, housing, partner relationship, etc., that may become heightened with an addition to the family.

HFA is the sole topic featured in an issue of *The Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community* (Volume 34, Numbers 1/2 2007). The title of the issue is “The Healthy Families America Initiative: Integrating Research, Theory, and Practice,” and was edited by researcher Dr. Joe Galano. There are 11 distinct articles about various aspects of HFA and authors include a number of PCA America national office staff including Senior Director of Research, Kathryn Harding.

PCA America was established in 1972 with the belief that child abuse and neglect is preventable. The not-for-profit, volunteer-based organization is committed to preventing child abuse in all forms through education, research, public awareness, and public policy development. Today, PCA America has 50 statewide chapters.

PCA America implemented the Healthy Families America (HFA) initiative in 1992 in partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities, building on two decades of research in the field of home visiting. HFA serves families of all ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, meeting the needs of close to 600 communities in 40 states, DC, the U.S. Territories and Canada.

Healthy Families America is an effective and proven evidence-based home visiting program according the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. PCA America is proud to support HFA and to be part of a national coalition of organizations dedicated to improving the home visiting field.

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About CHI St. Joseph's Health

CHI St. Joseph's Health is a 25-bed critical access hospital serving communities in Hubbard, Becker, Cass and Wadena Counties since 1946. In recent years, CHI St. Joseph's Health's award-winning teams received several national honors including: The Joint Commission Top Performer on Key Quality Measures in surgery; Top 100 Critical Access Hospital, HealthStrong; WomenCertified's America's Best Hospitals Women's Choice Award in obstetrics; and the Studer Group Fire Starter Healthcare Organization of the Month among other national, regional and state recognitions.

About CHI

Catholic Health Initiatives, a nonprofit, faith-based health system formed in 1996 through the consolidation of four Catholic health systems, expresses its mission each day by creating and nurturing healthy communities in the hundreds of sites across the nation where we provide care. The nation's third-largest nonprofit health system, Englewood, Colorado-based CHI operates in 18 states and comprises 103 hospitals, including four academic health centers and major teaching hospitals as well as 30 critical-access facilities; community health-services organizations; accredited nursing colleges; home-health agencies; living communities; and other facilities and services that span the inpatient and outpatient continuum of care. In fiscal year 2015, CHI provided almost \$970 million in charity care and community benefit - an 8% increase over the previous year -- for programs and services for the poor, free clinics, education and research. Charity care and community benefit totaled more than \$1.6 billion with the inclusion of the unpaid costs of Medicare. The health system, which generated operating revenues of \$15.2 billion in fiscal year 2015, has total assets of approximately \$23 billion. Learn more at www.catholichealthinitiatives.org.

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