



*A Member of
Catholic Health East,
Sponsored by the
Sisters of Mercy*

Contact:

Kate Kreger, Director of Marketing and Communications
St. James Mercy Hospital
411 Canisteo Street
Hornell, NY 14843 Ph: 607-324-8233

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. James Mercy Hospital Announces Closure of Sister René Dental Center

February 7, 2013...Hornell, NY...St. James Mercy Hospital (SJM) announced that it is closing the Sister René Dental Center located at 17 Seneca Street in Hornell, effective March 8, 2013.

According to Mary LaRowe, St. James Mercy Health System President and CEO, "This was a very difficult decision for SJMH's board of directors and leadership. In spite of our efforts to increase volumes and reduce expenses, the costs associated with operating the Dental Center are not sustainable. The program presents significant financial risk due to reimbursement issues, with Medicaid as the payor for the majority of patients. In order to preserve other mission-critical healthcare services at SJMH, we must take this difficult step to minimize overall risk to the organization," she said.

Ms. LaRowe stated that SJMH has worked closely with the New York State Department of Health and has diligently sought out resources and partners to take over the dental practice, but has been unsuccessful in striking an agreement to transfer the business. "Many providers of similar services in the area are experiencing similar challenges, given the economic downturn and the steep decline in reimbursement rates," she said.

Staff at Sr. René Dental Center will assist patients in identifying alternative dental providers. "We recognize our patients' need for ongoing care, and we are committed to helping them find other resources for dental services," said Ms. LaRowe. "We have identified other regional providers who are accepting new patients, and will assist patients in their transition as appropriate."

Sister René Dental Center was established to provide care to people who otherwise might not have access to dental services. "We recognize the need the Sr. René Dental Center has filled in our community, and we are grateful to have been able to serve the community in this capacity," said Ms. LaRowe. "Especially, we are thankful for the high quality, compassionate care our dental staff has provided to patients over the years," she said.

###