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St. James Mercy Hospital Receives Grant to Launch Addiction Education Program

December 29, 2011...Hornell, NY...St. James Mercy Hospital announced that it has received a \$2,000 grant to launch an education program for community residents, caregivers, and others who have family members struggling with alcohol or chemical addiction. The new program will be offered free of charge to help participants understand the cycles of addiction and develop coping strategies. The grant was awarded by Allegany Franciscan Ministries through the ACOR (Allegany Community Outreach) program.

According to Trish Uldrich, SJMH Chief Nursing Officer, "Alcohol and drug addiction education is essential to help families cope with this significant problem so often hidden in our society. Currently, St. James Mercy Hospital offers family education to members of our inpatients' family, but there is no program of this kind for the general public in our area, and we are excited about bringing a new, valuable and free service to families in need."

There is a growing demand for addiction education, said Ms. Uldrich. "At our MATCH service [Mercycare Addiction Treatment Unit of Hornell], we receive more than 250 calls annually from people seeking guidance in dealing with addicted family members, and it is estimated that there are over 300 opiate-addicted people in Steuben Co. It is clear that local families need more information and support," she said.

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The education sessions will be presented by St. James Mercy's behavioral health staff. "As an experienced provider of both inpatient and outpatient addiction services, the MATCH staff is excited to share their expertise with other members of the community," said Ms. Uldrich. The program is expected to begin in late spring in Hornell. Topics will include identifying the signs of addiction in loved ones, how to approach family members with a possible addiction problem and facilitate treatment options, and offering skills for important self care of family members who have been affected by someone else's addiction. More information is available by calling 607-324-6925.

The grant was awarded by ACOR (Allegany Community Outreach) program, which is administered by Allegany Franciscan Ministries, Inc. The grants provide short-term support to local community projects that are in keeping with the mission, vision, and direction of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany. The order was founded in 1859 to provide education for children in the Allegany area of southwestern New York State, and began health ministries in Florida the late 1920's. In 1997 the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany joined with the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of Providence to help form and sponsor Catholic Health East (CHE), a Catholic health system with ministries in eleven eastern states from Maine to Florida, of which St. James Mercy Hospital is a member. By the end of 2010, Allegany Franciscan Ministries had made more than 3,000 grants in its service areas totaling over \$53 million.

St. James Mercy Hospital offers the area's most comprehensive array of adult and adolescent behavioral health and addiction treatment services, predominantly serving the poor, underserved and disadvantaged. For more information visit <http://www.stjamesmercy.org/behavioral-medicine.shtml>

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