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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. James Mercy Hospital Announces Planned Date to Close Inpatient Adult and Adolescent Behavioral Health Services

September 20, 2013...Hornell, NY... St. James Mercy Hospital (SJMH) has completed the application process to discontinue operation of inpatient adult and adolescent psychiatric care services at the hospital located at 411 Canisteo Street in Hornell. Pending approval from the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) and Department of Health (DOH), the planned date of closure is December 19, 2013. Behavioral health employees were informed of this planned date on September 20. The plan for closure does not include the MATCH addiction treatment program located at the Mercycare campus (1 Bethesda Drive, Hornell).

According to Jennifer Sullivan, St. James Mercy Health System Interim President and CEO, "This is a very challenging time for behavioral health programs. SJMH's is not the only psychiatric care program facing closure, as NYS recently announced the plan to consolidate several state-run facilities into regional centers of excellence. Working with Steuben County Mental Health, OMH and other agencies, we will continue to assist patients in accessing inpatient and outpatient services. We are collaborating with county and regional providers to ensure transition and continuity of care for this vulnerable population."

During the process SJMH consulted and worked closely with OMH and Steuben County Mental Health to develop a transition plan. SJMH also attempted to secure a behavioral health partner to take over the program.

As stated when the intent to discontinue services was announced in June, the decision to pursue discontinuation of inpatient psychiatric care services was very difficult for SJMH administration and board of directors. "Unfortunately, due to cuts in reimbursement brought on by health reform, Behavioral Health Organization (BHO) payment models, and shorter lengths of stays, SJMH can no longer sustain these services," said Sullivan.

"For decades, St. James Mercy has been a leader in inpatient psychiatric care services, thanks to our excellent staff, providers and programming," said Sullivan. "Our reputation for high-quality, compassionate care is second to none, and we thank and commend the staff for their extraordinary professionalism and commitment to patients, not only during this difficult time, but for the many years we have served the community."

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