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Catholic Health Announces Major Technology Investment; Partners with Canisius College on Transformational Healthcare Initiative

Epic Electronic Health Record (EHR) system will provide Catholic Health clinicians and patients with advanced tools to improve healthcare delivery and population health across WNY

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Catholic Health is making the largest investment in the history of the health system, dedicating more than $100 million in state-of-the-art technology that will connect its hospitals, home care, long-term care, clinician offices, health centers and ancillary services with patients throughout the community. With Catholic Health's large network, this transformational investment marks a major milestone in a healing ministry that dates back more than 165 years.

"We're not satisfied being the quality leader in Western New York. We want to be the best-in-class nationally and that means giving our doctors, nurses, clinicians, and patients the most advanced tools available to improve care delivery and the overall health of our community," said Mark Sullivan, President & CEO of Catholic Health. "This investment not only represents a significant leap forward in EHR technology to enhance our quality achievements, it will also provide our patients with the very best care experience, giving them a sense of ease when accessing or navigating healthcare across Catholic Health."

Over the next 18 months, Catholic Health will transition to Epic, the most widely-used and comprehensive health record system in the country. Epic is used by a majority of U.S. News and World Report's top-ranked hospitals and medical schools who are working collaboratively every day to improve patient care, innovate healthcare delivery and achieve financial health. More than half of Americans receive care at a healthcare organization that uses Epic.

To create a technology center to build and test the new system-wide EHR, Catholic Health has announced a partnership with Canisius College to locate its 150-member EHR implementation team in the college's Main Street Science Hall. Catholic Health will lease 25,000 square feet of space on the building's third floor.

"When we looked at office space in the community to house our implementation team, the synergies between Catholic Health and Canisius College were many, especially the alignment of our Missions," Sullivan added. "The open floor plan, in an environment conducive to learning, is the perfect setting for a project of this kind. One of our goals is to create a talent pipeline between the college and our health system to give students real-world experience that they can put into practice within our health system."

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"We are proud to host this important initiative on the Canisius College campus," said Canisius College President John J. Hurley. "We look forward to working with Catholic Health to create internships and mentoring opportunities for students who will be future leaders in IT, data analytics, finance, healthcare and a host of disciplines that interface with this EHR technology as well as innovative collaborations among students and professionals throughout our beautiful campus."

Prior to selecting Epic, Catholic Health spent more than two years evaluating the country's leading EHR platforms to replace its current system. More than 1,000 doctors, nurses, clinical and non-clinical associates, and management staff across Catholic Health and its affiliated physician group Catholic Medical Partners, participated in the vendor demonstrations and user surveys.

"We wanted this to be an inclusive process and Epic was the clear choice among our physicians, nurses, and associates for its ease of use, functionality, and the integration it will give us across our system and for patients throughout the community," said Dr. Michael Galang, Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer at Catholic Health. "There is a reason the top hospitals and medical schools in the country use Epic and we look forward to harnessing this technology to attract the best medical talent to our health system and give area patients another reason to choose Catholic Health to improve and manage their health."

An EHR replacement of this magnitude requires a significant financial investment; a dedicated implementation team of clinical, business, and information technology experts; and months of rigorous planning, building, and testing before it can be rolled out system-wide. Catholic Health will add about 40 new positions, which will join its existing IT team and technology specialists from Epic, to make up its EHR implementation team.

The entire implementation process is expected to take about 18 months to complete. "We have a lot of work ahead of us to implement Epic throughout our hospitals, outpatient centers, home and community-based care facilities and physician offices," Dr. Galang added. "While it's challenging work, it's also exciting because we know it will be a game-changer for our patients and care delivery in our community."

As Catholic Health continues to position itself among top-performing health systems in the country, Epic will give the Buffalo-based health system the ability to benchmark itself against the nation's leading providers and access to a vast library of analytics and best practices that are setting new standards for quality outcomes, patient safety, and population health management across the U.S.

"I've had the pleasure of working with and getting to know the team at Catholic Health during this process. They are a very thoughtful, dedicated group who are well prepared for this new challenge," said Ellen White, Epic Vice President. "We are thrilled to be starting this relationship and look forward to working with them as they continue to provide high quality care to the communities of Western New York."

"Since our inception, Catholic Health has been at the forefront in bringing advanced technology to our community," Sullivan said. "With Epic, we are making the most significant investment in the history of our health system to continue transforming care throughout Western New York and to deliver on our promise to provide the highest quality care, now and into the future."

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Fact Sheet

Catholic Health to Roll Out Epic Integrated EHR

- The more than $100 million investment will be the largest in Catholic Health's history.

- Catholic Health has been a pioneer in electronic health records (EHR), and was one of the first in the region to implement an EHR system in 2000.

- To elevate its technology to the most state-of-the-art in 2019, Catholic Health engaged Epic Systems Corporation, the largest EHR system in the country.

- Patients will benefit from MyChart, Epic's intuitive patient portal for mobile, tablet and desktop applications.
  - MyChart gives patients access to valuable health information to monitor and manage their care, allowing them to view test results, personalized care plans, and health and wellness information. It also provides greater connectivity to message providers, make appointments and pay bills online.

- For Catholic Health's care team, Epic improves care coordination by providing an integrated, single source to access and seamlessly share health information with providers, improving clinical efficiency, productivity and satisfaction.
  - Epic's interoperability platform, Care Everywhere, allows Catholic Health providers to exchange clinical information with other Epic users anywhere in the county, as well as other providers that use different EHRs.

- Catholic Health will lease 20,000 square feet of space from Canisius College on the third floor of its Main Street Science Hall at 1901 Main St., Buffalo, where at least 150 team members will work to facilitate the implementation.

- Catholic Health will be recruiting 40 new information technology, clinical and business specialists to make up its 150 member EHR implementation team.

- Catholic Health's EHR implementation will take approximately 18 months, with go-live in late 2020.

- More than 1,000 doctors, nurses, clinical and non-clinical associates and management staff across Catholic Health and Catholic Medical Partners participated in the selection of the Epic System.

- Epic protects and manages 64% of all patient records in the U.S., working with elite health systems and medical schools including Mayo Clinic, Johns Hopkins, UCLA Medical Center and Cleveland Clinic.

- More than 200 million patients worldwide currently have their medical records in an Epic system.