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For Immediate Release

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Number

Largest non-profit behavioral health hospital one step closer to reality

The region is one step closer to a new model of care for people having a psychiatric emergency and for inpatient mental health treatment. Legacy Health, Oregon Health & Science University, Adventist Health and Kaiser Permanente have all signed a Joint Operating Agreement (JOA) to proceed with the formation of the new ***Unity Center for Behavioral Health***.

In February, the four major healthcare providers came together and signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) to create the region's largest non-profit hospital focused on behavioral health. The JOA outlines specifically how Unity Center will be managed and operated, and outlines the financial and clinical management of the new organization. With the signed JOA, work can now begin to create the space to house the Unity Center and to begin to bring physicians and staff onboard.

Since the signing of the LOI, over 20 physician-led design groups have been realizing the vision of Unity Center for Behavioral Health. These design groups cover every aspect of the patient journey, including such things as patient experience, clinical care and building design. There are other operational planning groups that have started developing plans that cover areas from information technology to staffing. This work is expected to continue over the next year.

Preliminary work on the design of the new facility has included working with community members and patient advocates to ensure the design will contribute to the healing process. Space within the building will include an area for community-based support groups to help transition patients upon discharge.

Each year in Oregon, an estimated 1 in 20 adults experience a serious mental illness and 31,000 adolescents suffer a major depressive episode that often leads to other social issues. Untreated mental illness is common among the prison population both nationally and locally. The Oregon Department of Corrections (ODOC) has determined that more than half of Oregon's prison population has been diagnosed with a mental illness.

As the first behavioral health center of its kind in the region, the Unity Center for Behavioral Health is expected to become a national model for providing compassionate mental health care in times of crisis, without unnecessary waiting. This unprecedented collaboration of four health systems shares the goal of providing care for all those in need through a combination of emergency, inpatient and outpatient services and embraces the concepts of hope, recovery and resilience.

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The Unity Center will include 79 adult patient beds and 22 beds for adolescents and will also house organizations that provide community behavioral health services, helping to coordinate continued support to patients after discharge.

About Adventist Health

[Adventist Health](#) is a faith-based, not-for-profit integrated health care delivery system serving communities in California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington. Our workforce of 28,600 includes more than 20,500 employees; 4,500 medical staff physicians; and 3,600 volunteers. Founded on Seventh-day Adventist health values, Adventist Health provides compassionate care in 19 hospitals, more than 220 clinics (hospital-based, rural health and physician clinics), 14 home care agencies, seven hospice agencies and four joint-venture retirement centers.

About Kaiser Permanente

[Kaiser Permanente](#) is committed to helping shape the future of health care. We are recognized as one of America's leading health care providers and nonprofit health plans. Founded in 1945, our mission is to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve. We currently serve approximately 9.5 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia, including more than 500,000 medical and 230,000 dental members in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Care for members and patients is focused on their total health and guided by their personal physicians, specialists and team of caregivers. Kaiser Permanente is dedicated to care innovations, clinical research, health education and the support of community health.

About Legacy Health

[Legacy Health](#), Oregon's only locally owned nonprofit healthcare organization, includes Legacy Emanuel Medical Center, Randall Children's Hospital at Legacy Emanuel, Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center, Legacy Meridian Park Medical Center, Legacy Mount Hood Medical Center, Legacy Salmon Creek Medical Center, Legacy Laboratory Services, Legacy Research, Legacy Medical Group and CareMark/Managed HealthCare Northwest PPO.

About OHSU

[Oregon Health & Science University](#) is the state's only public academic health and research university. As one of Oregon's largest employers with more than 14,600 employees, OHSU's size contributes to its ability to provide many services and community support not found anywhere else in the state. OHSU serves patients from every corner of Oregon and is a conduit for learning for more than 4,400 students and trainees. OHSU is the source of more than 200 community outreach programs that bring health and education services to each county in the state.