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Catholic Health Initiatives Names Industry Veteran Michael Covert as Top Executive of Houston Health System

Palomar Health President and CEO Brings 40-Plus Years of Experience

HOUSTON – June 3, 2014 – Michael H. Covert, a veteran health care executive with wide-ranging experience in all facets of a dynamic, rapidly evolving industry, has been named chief executive officer of the CHI St. Luke's Health market.

Covert, currently president and chief executive officer of Palomar Health in San Diego, will serve not only as the top executive of the Houston-based health system but also as a senior vice president for Catholic Health Initiatives, the parent company of CHI St. Luke's Health.

The two roles reflect and underscore the expanding responsibilities of key Catholic Health Initiatives executives responsible for providing leadership, strategic integration and overall operational management for regional or statewide groups of health facilities that span the continuum of care.

Covert boasts a long and diverse career in health care that spans four decades and includes top positions with leading tertiary care facilities, an academic medical center and the Physician Corp. of America, which operated health-maintenance organizations, physician clinics and other health care facilities in several states.

At Palomar Health, where he served as president and CEO since January 2003, Covert led a \$1.5 billion health care system with three hospitals, two skilled-nursing facilities, home-health agencies, ambulatory facilities, a large medical foundation and a fund-raising organization, among other entities. Palomar, which became part of the Mayo Clinic Care Network this past year, was recognized by *Modern Healthcare* magazine in 2011, 2012 and 2014 as one of the nation's top small health systems.

“Michael has the qualities, skill and professional background to help lead CHI through the many dramatic changes occurring today in health care,” said Michael Rowan, president of health systems delivery and chief operating officer of Englewood, Colo.-based Catholic Health Initiatives, which operates hospitals and hundreds of other health facilities serving communities in 18 states.

“In this new era of health care, successful leaders need experience in managing networks of care, working closely with physicians and getting involved in insurance and valued-based contracting as we move toward clinical integration across the entire continuum of care. We think Michael is the perfect fit for this challenging role.”

Leonard Tallerine, chair of the CHI St. Luke’s Health Board of Directors, added, “Michael’s depth of experience has honed two key skills: Communication and collaboration. With his extensive background in managing health systems, he brings a unique ability to work across all facets of the community to achieve what is best for the people and patients we serve now and in the future.”

Covert, who will start at CHI in late August, will replace Deborah Lee-Eddie, who has served as regional market CEO and CHI senior vice president of operations on an interim basis since January 2014. Chosen after an extensive national search, Covert will direct CHI St. Luke’s and its six hospitals in the Houston metropolitan area and oversee a regional strategy that is expected to include growth in neighboring communities as well.

“I am thrilled to be part of Catholic Health Initiatives, one of the most forward-thinking health systems in this country,” said Covert. “It’s an organization that demands a strong, strategic approach to adapt to this country’s ever-changing health care industry. I believe my long background will help the organization fulfill its mission to create and sustain healthier communities.”

Prior to joining Palomar about 12 years ago, Covert served as president of Washington Hospital Center, Washington, D.C.; and president and chief executive officer of Sarasota Memorial Health System, Sarasota, Fla. He also has served as senior vice president for Physician Corp. of America, Wichita, Kansas; as executive director of the Ohio State University Hospitals, Columbus, Ohio; and as executive vice president and chief executive officer of St. Francis Regional Medical Center, Wichita, Kansas, among other positions in the health care field.

Covert holds a Bachelor of Science in business administration and a Master in Health Administration from Washington University School of Business, St. Louis. A past chair of the Association of Hospitals and Health Systems of Florida, he served as a member of the board, executive committee and as chair-elect of the California Hospital Association; and as vice-chair of the board of directors of the University of Arizona Health Network..

About Catholic Health Initiatives: Catholic Health Initiatives, a nonprofit, faith-based health system formed in 1996 through the consolidation of four Catholic health systems, expresses its mission each day by creating and nurturing healthy communities in the hundreds of sites across the nation where it provides care. One of the nation's largest health systems, Englewood, Colo.-based CHI operates in 18 states and comprises 89 hospitals, including four academic medical centers and teaching hospitals and 23 critical-access facilities; community health-services organizations; accredited nursing colleges; home-health agencies; and other facilities that span the inpatient and outpatient continuum of care. In fiscal year 2013, CHI provided \$762 million in charity care and community benefit, including services for the poor, free clinics, education and research. Learn more at www.catholichealthinitiatives.com

About CHI St. Luke's Health: CHI St. Luke's Health is dedicated to a mission of enhancing community health through high-quality, cost-effective care. In partnership with our physicians and community partners, we are committed to excellence and compassion in caring for the whole person while creating healthier communities. CHI St. Luke's Health is comprised of six facilities, including CHI St. Luke's Health–Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center, a world-class quaternary care facility that is home to the Texas Heart® Institute, which was founded in 1962 by Denton A. Cooley, MD. Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center was the first hospital in Texas named a Magnet Hospital for Nursing Excellence, receiving the award three times. CHI St. Luke's Health is a part of Catholic Health Initiatives (CHI)—one of the nation's largest health systems. Headquartered in Englewood, Colorado, CHI operates in 18 states and includes 89 hospitals; including four academic medical centers; 23 critical-access facilities; community health services organizations; accredited nursing colleges; home health agencies; and other facilities that span the inpatient and outpatient continuum of care. Learn more at www.stluketexas.com.