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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Henry Ford Health System Teams up with HHS to Increase Access to Monoclonal Antibody Therapy**

DETROIT (April 15, 2021) – Henry Ford Health System announced today, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), that it is boosting access to monoclonal antibody therapy in southeast Michigan, a promising treatment that has been shown to keep high-risk COVID-19 patients out of the hospital.

If administered within 10 days of the onset of symptoms after a positive COVID-19 test, the one-time therapy is effective in neutralizing the virus and preventing symptoms from worsening. The treatment is administered intravenously through a vein.

With the support of HHS, Henry Ford is opening a new monoclonal antibody (mAb) infusion center in southwest Detroit and expanding mAb therapy services at three of its hospitals that care for patients in underserved communities – [Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit](#), [Henry Ford Macomb Hospital in Clinton Township](#) and [Henry Ford Allegiance Health in Jackson](#). HHS is also providing support to staff and equip the infusion center expansions.

The new infusion center is at Community Health and Social Services (CHASS), a federally qualified health center whose physician services are contracted through Henry Ford. CHASS first opened in 1970 and serves underserved Black and Latino patient populations.

“We are very grateful for the support of the Department of Health and Human Services and to be part of this national community outreach initiative at such a critical juncture in the pandemic,” said [Bob Riney, Henry Ford’s President of Healthcare Operations and Chief Operating Officer](#). “If we can maximize our community outreach efforts and drive referrals to these sites, we could really make an impact on bringing this pandemic under control.”

On March 17, 2021, HHS announced it was investing \$150 million to increase access to mAb therapy in underserved and high-risk communities across the country. HHS, with support from KPMG LLP, is developing new prototype models for expanding access to mAb treatment and leveraging an existing network of healthcare partners that have the experience and equipment

necessary to provide the therapy. Other U.S. geographic areas being eyed by HHS are Maryland, New Jersey, San Diego and Houston.

mAb therapy is the first treatment developed specifically for COVID-19 to be granted emergency use authorization by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Last month, a Phase 3 clinical trial showed that an antibody cocktail reduced the risk of hospitalization or death by 70% in patients who received the drug intravenously compared to those who received a placebo. The data also showed the drug's effectiveness against multiple COVID-19 variants including the B.1.1.7 strain that is the dominate one circulating in Michigan.

Monoclonal antibodies are laboratory-produced molecules engineered to serve as substitute antibodies that can restore, enhance or mimic the body's immune system and target specific attacks by viruses or cancer. The outpatient treatment is only for patients ages 12 years and older with mild to moderate COVID-19 and who are at high risk for progressing to severe disease and/or hospitalization. An infusion treatment takes about one hour to complete. mAb therapy is not authorized for use in patients who are hospitalized or require oxygen therapy due to COVID-19 or require oxygen therapy due to underlying non-COVID-19 related comorbidity.

[\*\*Adnan Munkarah, M.D., Executive Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer\*\*](#), said expanding access to mAb therapy has the capacity to bring relief to overwhelmed hospitals. "With the virus surging in Michigan, and until we get more people vaccinated, monoclonal antibody therapy can prevent people from developing severe disease and from being hospitalized," Dr. Munkarah said. "This could be a real game-changer for Michigan."

[\*\*Bruce Muma, M.D., CEO of the Henry Ford Physician Network\*\*](#) who is leading the expansion of the mAb initiative for Henry Ford with Jane Thornhill, Vice President of Business Operations for the HFPN, said provider referrals are key to getting patients access to the therapy. The new sites have a combined capacity to treat 100 patients a day. All referrals will be screened by phone and patients will receive an appointment for infusion at one of the four expansion sites. "As awareness increases, we expect demand will grow. We are ready to rapidly add capacity and provide additional access and availability to all who need this effective treatment. These new infusion sites are intended to serve the needs of the entire community in partnership with health care organizations across Southeast Michigan," Dr. Muma said.

The infusion centers at CHASS, Henry Ford Hospital, Henry Ford Macomb Hospital and Henry Ford Allegiance Health will be open from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday – Sunday. The first treatments will get under way today at the three hospitals. The CHASS site will begin treating patients on April 20.

Patients are required to have a positive COVID-19 PCR test, meet certain eligibility criteria and receive a referral from a physician before they can be approved for mAb treatment.

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**About Henry Ford Health System:** Founded in 1915 by Henry Ford himself, Henry Ford Health System is a non-profit, integrated health system committed to improving people's lives through excellence in the science and art of healthcare and healing. Henry Ford Health System includes Henry Ford Medical Group, with more than 1,900 physicians and researchers practicing in more than 50 specialties at locations throughout Southeast and Central Michigan. Acute care hospitals include Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, MI and Henry Ford Allegiance Health in Jackson, MI – both Magnet® hospitals; Henry Ford Macomb Hospital; Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital; and Henry Ford Wyandotte Hospital.

The largest of these is Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, a quaternary care research and teaching hospital and Level 1 Trauma Center recognized for clinical excellence in cardiology, cardiovascular surgery, neurology, neurosurgery, and multi-organ transplants. The health system also provides comprehensive, best-in-class care for cancer at the Brigitte Harris Cancer Pavilion, and orthopedics and sports medicine at the William Clay Ford Center for Athletic Medicine – both in Detroit.

As one of the nation's leading academic medical centers, Henry Ford Health System annually trains more than 3,000 medical students, residents, and fellows in more than 50 accredited programs, and has trained nearly 40% of the state's physicians. Our dedication to education and research is supported by nearly \$100 million in annual grants from the National Institutes of Health and other public and private foundations.

Henry Ford's not-for-profit health plan, Health Alliance Plan (HAP), provides health coverage for more than 540,000 people.

Henry Ford Health System employs more than 33,000 people, including more than 1,600 physicians, more than 6,600 nurses and 5,000 allied health professionals.