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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**UMass Memorial Medical Center, MA Department of Public Health and HHS partner to expand access to monoclonal antibody therapy to treat COVID-19 patients**

Worcester, MA (July 14, 2021) -- UMass Memorial Medical Center, the flagship academic medical center of UMass Memorial Health, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), announced today that it has expanded access to COVID-19 monoclonal antibody (mAb) treatments and will begin administering the therapies at its Hahnemann campus in Worcester. For people who have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus and are at high risk for developing severe illness, this promising mAb treatment has been shown to help prevent progression of the disease that might otherwise require hospitalization.

The treatments will be available beginning July 14 and open Monday to Friday between the hours of 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. To confirm eligibility for the treatment and book an appointment, patients should contact 855-UMASS-MD.

If administered within 10 days of onset of COVID-19 symptoms, the one-time therapy is highly effective in neutralizing the virus and preventing symptoms from worsening. The treatment is administered through intravenous infusion, delivering medication directly into a patient's bloodstream.

"As an organization dedicated to health equity, our COVID-19 response has focused on vulnerable communities from the start," said Michael Gustafson, MD, president of UMass Memorial Medical Center. "It is both a responsibility and an honor for us to be a dedicated treatment facility providing outpatient monoclonal antibody treatments to COVID-19 positive patients in the greater Worcester County area.

"As the Delta variant is spreading more rapidly in Massachusetts, this facility will help us to care for more individuals, preventing the spread of the disease," he continued.

"Massachusetts is on the leading edge of the worldwide fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, and nowhere is that clearer than at UMass Memorial Medical Center," said Congressman Jim McGovern. "We are not out of the woods yet, and this new monoclonal antibody therapy treatment, along with the federal funding that supports it, is a key part of our national plan to

crush the virus and save lives. It's a testament to the amazing leadership and staff at UMass Memorial that they were chosen to offer this treatment as part of this initiative, bringing healing and hope to patients here in Central Massachusetts."

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

UMass Memorial Medical Center is among the first groups of healthcare leaders, and the second in Massachusetts, to join this national health equity initiative. It joins six other provider organizations with 17 infusion sites sponsored by HHS as part of the federal effort to help end COVID-19 and improve health equity in underserved communities across the country. Infusion sites under this initiative have now been established in Worcester, MA; Landover, MD; San Diego, CA; Detroit, MI; Barnstable County, MA; Houston, TX; and Beckley, WV.

"People across the country continue to test positive for COVID-19, and many of them are still at great risk of severe hospitalization and even death from this virus," said Dr. John Redd, chief medical officer for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "We encourage anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 to discuss with their healthcare provider if monoclonal antibody treatment is right for them. We are pleased to partner with leaders in the medical community, like UMass Memorial Medical Center, to make this treatment more accessible."

The therapy is the first COVID-19 treatment granted emergency use authorization by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for outpatient use. A Phase 3 clinical trial showed that the antibody therapy reduced the risk of hospitalization or death by up to 87% in patients who received the drug intravenously compared to those who received a placebo.

UMass Memorial Medical Center will be able to treat up to 40 patients per week. To be eligible for mAb treatment, patients must meet the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) definition of "high risk. Same-day COVID-19 tests can be performed, followed by a telemedicine visit for evaluation and qualification for therapy. The infusion treatment takes 20 minutes, then patients are monitored for an hour. There is no cost to the patient and treatment is offered regardless of immigration status or health insurance.

### **UMass Memorial Health**

UMass Memorial Health is the largest not-for-profit health care system in Central Massachusetts with more than 15,500 employees and 2,100 physicians, many of whom are members of UMass Memorial Medical Group and Harrington Physician Services. We are the clinical partner of the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Our comprehensive system includes UMass Memorial Medical Center, UMass Memorial Health – Harrington, UMass Memorial Health –

HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital, UMass Memorial Health – Marlborough Hospital, and UMass Memorial Health – Community Healthlink. Together, we impact every aspect of life in the region by making health and wellness services available to everyone, advocating for social equality and providing economic stability and opportunity. There are many ways to heal. We pursue them all. Relentlessly. Visit [www.ummhealth.org](http://www.ummhealth.org).

**About Crush COVID:** A treatment for COVID-19 is here. With the help of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), state and local health departments, and hospital and health clinics across the country, treatment takes only one visit and it's authorized by the FDA. Monoclonal antibody therapy (mAbs) is available to patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 and are considered at high risk for progressing to severe COVID-19 and/or hospitalization. To learn more about eligibility and find a treatment location near you, visit <https://crushcovid.com>