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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ochsner Lafayette General and HHS partner to expand access to monoclonal antibody therapy to COVID-19 patients in Acadiana

Lafayette, La., (September 7, 2021) -- Ochsner Lafayette General, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Louisiana Department of Health, announced that beginning Wednesday, September 8, it will begin providing COVID-19 monoclonal antibody (mAb) treatment at a mobile infusion unit to further expand access beyond its four existing infusion locations. For people who are at high risk for developing severe COVID-19 illness and have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus, this promising mAb treatment has been shown to help prevent progression of the disease that might otherwise require hospitalization.

In response to the growing COVID-19 case rates and the rapid spread of the Delta variant, Ochsner Lafayette General will expand access to the mAb infusion for eligible patients at a 10-chair mobile unit adjacent to Ochsner Lafayette General Orthopedic Hospital. With launch of the mobile unit, Ochsner Lafayette General will eventually be able to treat up to 500 additional patients per week at this site. Beginning tomorrow, treatment will be available at the mobile unit Monday through Friday between the hours of 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. Once fully staffed, infusions will be available seven days a week between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Ochsner Lafayette General is already providing mAb therapy at four locations— Ochsner University Hospital & Clinics, Ochsner Acadia General Hospital, Ochsner Abrom Kaplan Memorial Hospital, and Ochsner St. Martin Hospital. To confirm eligibility for the treatment, receive a referral, and book an appointment, patients should contact 1-833-TREAT-COVID (1-833-873-2826).

If administered within 10 days of onset of COVID-19 symptoms, the one-time therapy, made up of synthetic proteins designed to mimic the body's own immune response, is highly effective in neutralizing the virus and preventing symptoms from worsening. The treatment is administered through intravenous infusion.

"Given the surge in COVID-19 cases in our area, we are especially pleased to be offering expanded access to mAbs to better serve high risk members of our community. This innovative mobile solution will ensure that we can continue to meet growing demand for treatment while keeping our most vulnerable citizens out of the hospital. While we are honored to partner with federal and state officials to continue our fight against COVID-19, we remind everyone that their greatest weapon to defend the deadly virus is to get vaccinated," said Ochsner Lafayette General Chief Medical Officer Amanda Logue, MD.

"Louisiana is unfortunately experiencing COVID-19 case and hospitalization numbers that exceed any other time during the pandemic. With insufficient vaccination rates across the state, our people are most vulnerable to the highly transmissible Delta variant." said Dr. Joseph Kanter, State Health Officer at the Louisiana Department of Health. "We are proud to support Ochsner Lafayette General in expanding access to this life-saving treatment and working with them to ensure our underserved residents know both where and how to get treated if they contract COVID-19."

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 to provide the therapy for underserved and disadvantaged populations.

Ochsner Lafayette General is the first provider organization in Louisiana to join this national initiative. It joins a growing list of mAbs therapy providers supported by KPMG and sponsored by HHS as part of the federal effort to help end COVID-19 and improve health equity in underserved communities across the country. In addition to the new site at Ochsner General Lafayette, more than 50 infusion sites have now been established or expanded under this initiative in Landover, MD; San Diego, CA; Detroit, MI; Barnstable County, MA; Houston, TX; Beckley, WV; Worcester, MA; western Michigan; southern Missouri, northeast South Carolina, southern Mississippi, northern Mississippi, central Mississippi, and North Carolina.

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 70% in patients who received the drug intravenously compared to those who received a placebo.

To be eligible for mAb treatment, patients must meet the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) definition of “high risk.” Following a positive COVID-19 test result, a telemedicine visit will be conducted for evaluation and qualification for therapy. Patients are monitored onsite for an hour after completion of the infusion treatment. Treatment is offered regardless of immigration status, health insurance coverage, or ability to pay.

About Ochsner Lafayette General

Ochsner Lafayette General has more than 4,500 employees and serves 220,000 patients per year. The organization includes Ochsner Lafayette General Medical Center (LGMC), Ochsner Lafayette General Orthopaedic Hospital, Ochsner Lafayette General Surgical Hospital, Ochsner St. Martin Hospital, Ochsner University Hospital & Clinics UHC), Ochsner Acadia General Hospital and Ochsner Abram Kaplan Memorial Hospital and a number of clinics, urgent cares and professional centers. Ochsner LGMC is the only Level II Trauma Center in Southwest Louisiana. Both Ochsner LGMC and Ochsner UHC are major teaching hospitals, providing graduate medical education across many disciplines.

About Crush COVID: A treatment for COVID-19 is here and is available in every state at hundreds of locations across the country. With the help of KPMG, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), state and local health departments, and local hospitals and health clinics, eligible patients will have increased access to monoclonal antibody therapy (mAbs) treatment in a growing number of underserved and disadvantaged communities through this initiative. Authorized by the FDA, mAbs are available to high risk patients who have either tested positive for COVID-19 or are unvaccinated and have been exposed to the virus. To learn more about eligibility and find a treatment location near you, visit <https://crushcovid.com>.