



## Press Release

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## GREAT LAKES HEALTH SYSTEM OF WESTERN NEW YORK IS ANNOUNCED

**BUFFALO, N.Y. (Friday, October 17, 2008)** - The governing board established to unify Kaleida Health and the Erie County Medical Center Corporation (ECMCC) today officially announced its new name, the Great Lakes Health System of Western New York.

The board of directors (formerly known as "NewCo") approved the name at its meeting earlier this week and it was subsequently announced to employees across both organizations on Friday.

"Today, we take another step forward in building a new era for health care," said Robert Gioia, chair of the Great Lakes Board of Directors. "Great Lakes Health conveys a strong geographical presence that is consistent with our mission. We are no longer limiting ourselves to serving a part of the city or any particular suburb. As a single entity, we have the resources to serve the entire region and beyond."

Unified governance has created a process that will create an integrated health system with a vibrant ECMCC campus, along with the five Kaleida Health campuses. Just as important, it is optimizing and integrating physicians through private practices and the University of Buffalo partnership.

"Through the Great Lakes Health name and brand, we are confirming our mission of creating the preeminent healthcare delivery system for Western New York and beyond," said James R. Kaskie, president and CEO of Great Lakes Health and Kaleida Health. "We have taken competitive energy and turned it into collaboration with a shared common goal of taking what we have today and making it better for the patients we serve."

Kaskie said the work since the signing of the binding agreement between Kaleida Health and ECMCC in June has been on-going and positive. The Professional Steering Committee (PSC) is now staffed and they are focusing on four areas: intensive care, transplant, psychiatry and orthopaedics.

Great Lakes Health will develop a clinical services and tactical plan for integration and growth. Key to this will be solving issues with ECMCC labor, resolving its complicated financial relationship with Erie County and ensuring the long-term financial stability of the hospital.

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"Both organizations are working very well together and have begun to build a very productive relationship," said Jody Lomeo, interim CEO of ECMCC and the vice chair of the Great Lakes Health Board of Directors. "This is about building, not taking away. We all have one goal in mind - that all of our patients receive the very best care possible. If we keep that in mind, the other issues will work themselves out."

While not a full-asset merger, unified governance is the first step of a commitment to get Erie County taxpayers out of the health care business. State legislation is still necessary to accomplish County Executive Chris Collins' goal of "protecting county taxpayers."

This would include modifying the public benefit corporation law to allow ECMCC to be subordinate to Great Lakes Health. As these necessary steps are undertaken, Kaleida Health and ECMCC will continue to operate as separate organizations with no immediate changes relative to their respective employees, services or programs. This includes each organization retaining its respective name.

The new not-for-profit corporation comprises board membership from Kaleida Health, ECMCC, the University at Buffalo and members of the community.

Stand Advertising coordinated the name and logo development for Great Lakes Health.

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***\*\*\* MEDIA AVAILABILITY NOTICE: Jim Kaskie and Jody Lomeo will be available for interviews Friday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m., at Buffalo General Hospital. Please call for arrangements.***