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**EMBARGOED UNTIL OCTOBER 3, 2019 AT 1:00 P.M.**

**SENTARA PARTNERS WITH LISC TO ANNOUNCE \$100 MILLION COMMUNITY INVESTMENT TO IMPROVE HOUSING, CREATE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY & DRIVE COMMUNITY WELLNESS**

*Sentara Healthcare, LISC Joined by Gov. Northam to Announce Community Investment Across the Commonwealth*

**NORFOLK, VA-** Sentara Healthcare and Optima Health in partnership with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), the nation's largest community development organization, today were joined by Governor Ralph Northam and other Virginia leaders to announce a \$100 million investment to address social determinants of health in underserved communities across the Commonwealth. This investment builds upon Sentara's commitment to create healthier communities and improve the quality of life for Virginians most in need. The announcement was made at the Sentara Heart Hospital.

Sentara will contribute \$50 million to advance these goals in partnership with LISC which has committed to assemble an additional \$50 million from public and private sources to complement Sentara's investment.

Sentara and LISC's partnership will create housing and economic opportunities to address some of the most fundamental issues in public health. Beyond traditional health care, research has shown that social determinants of health, the conditions in which people live, work and learn, have a significant and lasting impact on health outcomes. According to [County Health Rankings](#), a project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, about [80 percent](#) of a person's health can be explained by factors such as income, education, neighborhood conditions, and the health behaviors shaped by these circumstances.

"Addressing these social issues is usually not possible inside the walls of a health care facility. If we want to reduce the need for emergency or medical care, we must have a positive impact on our patients and health plan members in their communities," said **Howard P. Kern, president and CEO of Sentara Healthcare**. "Sentara's mission is to improve health every day, in partnering with LISC, this investment has an opportunity to make a meaningful impact on public health for generations."

As part of this investment, LISC will open a local office in Hampton Roads to drive programmatic action and capital deployment, in partnership with its national team. LISC Hampton Roads will complement LISC's long-standing program office in Richmond and its unique Rural LISC investment program, which has supported efforts throughout the Commonwealth.



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“We know from both data and experience that when we catalyze opportunity for residents and communities, we can help people live longer and healthier lives,” **said Maurice A. Jones president and CEO of LISC**, which is in the midst of a 10-year, \$10 billion national effort to connect community investments to health gains. “By partnering with an integrated health system like Sentara, we can push aside barriers to health care, housing, education and employment, while supporting a shared prosperity throughout the Commonwealth. We are grateful for Sentara’s commitment to the people of Virginia and to innovative approaches to community health.”

In 2017, more than 250,000 children in Virginia lived in poverty, and over 50 percent of those children lived in households that spent more than half of their income on housing, leaving families with little room to spend money on transportation, exercise, medical care or healthy and nutritious food.

Sentara and LISC’s alliance will address these factors by facilitating the development and construction of new affordable housing, including supportive housing units for individuals with mental and behavioral health needs, as well as promote health care access and social services for residents. LISC and Sentara’s partnership also aims to prepare people for quality jobs in growth industries through training and coaching, as well as providing support to local entrepreneurs, with the goal of improving individual incomes and expanding local employment.

“As a physician, I know the critical role that communities play in determining health outcomes. Sentara and Optima have long been strong community partners dedicated to giving back and improving the health of Virginians through innovative, value-driven, and high-quality clinical care. This new partnership demonstrates a clear recognition of the importance of treating patients in a holistic way, and I am certain that this investment will be vital to our efforts to address the most pressing health challenges for generations of Virginians to come,” **said Governor Ralph Northam**.

“In line with Sentara’s integrated care model, this partnership embodies the Sentara mission ‘we improve health every day,’ propelling our communities forward by transforming housing, creating economic opportunity and empowerment and driving innovation and partnership,” **said Dian Calderone, chair, Sentara Healthcare Board of Directors**. “As a private, not-for-profit health system, we not only care about the communities we live in, we also take action to make them healthier.”

“This investment builds on our legacy of commitment to people and communities across the Commonwealth,” **says Dennis Matheis, president of Optima Health; executive vice president, Sentara Healthcare**. “With this partnership with LISC, we’re positively impacting social determinants to improve wellness and quality of life for thousands of Virginians.”



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For decades, Sentara has played an instrumental role in improving health outcomes across Virginia by providing routine charity care and contributions to local community organizations. In 2018, Sentara provided \$390 million in community benefit and earlier this year announced \$6.5 million to support local community health clinics and foodbanks.

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### **About Sentara**

Sentara Healthcare celebrates 130 years in pursuit of its mission – “we improve health every day.” Named to IBM Watson Health’s 2018 “Top 15 Health Systems,” Sentara is an integrated, not-for-profit system of 12 hospitals in Virginia and Northeastern North Carolina, including a Level I trauma center, the nationally-ranked Sentara Heart Hospital, two orthopedic hospitals, accredited Sentara Cancer Network and the Sentara Neurosciences Institute. The Sentara family also includes four medical groups, Nightingale Regional Air Ambulance and ground medical transport, senior care, home care and hospice, nursing rehabilitation centers, ambulatory outpatient campuses, advanced imaging and diagnostic centers, a clinically integrated network, the Sentara College of Health Sciences and the Optima Health Plan serving 450,000 members in Virginia, North Carolina and Ohio. With nearly 28,000 employees and ranked one of *Forbes* “America’s Best Employers” in 2018, Sentara is strategically focused on clinical quality and safety, innovation and creating an extraordinary health care experience for our patients and members.

### **About Optima Health**

At Optima Health, we are committed to providing members with quality, cost-effective health care. Helping you take care of yourself and your loved ones is our guiding mission. You’ll see our commitment to this in the variety of innovative wellness programs we sponsor. This same dedication is echoed in the concerned, caring manner that characterizes our customer service staff and philosophy. Simply put, we’re passionate about your health. Optima Health provides health plan coverage to approximately 500,000 members. We offer a full suite of commercial products including employee-owned and employer-sponsored plans, as well as Individual and Family health plans, employee assistance plans and plans serving Medicare and Medicaid enrollees. Our quality provider network features more than 25,000 providers including specialists, primary care physicians and hospitals. We offer programs to support members with chronic illnesses, customized wellness programs, and integrated clinical and behavioral health services—all to help our members improve their health.

### **About LISC**

With residents and partners, LISC forges resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity across America – great places to live, work, visit, do business and raise families. Since 1979, LISC has invested \$20 billion to build or rehab 400,500 affordable homes and apartments and develop 66.8 million square feet of retail, community and educational space. For more, visit [www.lisc.org](http://www.lisc.org).