NEWS RELEASE

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BROOKS MEMORIAL, TLC HEALTH NETWORK TO PARTNER WITH KALEIDA

Healthcare in the Southern Tier of Western New York is headed for a major transformation with Lake Shore Health Care Center and Brooks Memorial Hospital announcing their intention to affiliate with Kaleida Health.

The objective is to coordinate care, develop partnerships and secure the respective hospital’s presence in the region, ensuring that the health care needs of the community are met.

Brooks Memorial Hospital announced today that it will terminate its affiliation agreement with UPMC Hamot in Erie, Pennsylvania and enter into a partnership with Kaleida Health. TLC Health Network, the parent of Lake Shore Health Care Center, is negotiating an affiliation with Kaleida Health as well.

“Our board believes the partnership with Kaleida Health will help Brooks transform the way it delivers care,” said Christopher Lanski, chair of the board of directors. “The opportunity is to be connected to a larger, local health system that is community-focused yet, maintains a very large footprint across Western New York. Moreover, it allows for delivery of health care in Chautauqua County with connectivity to Kaleida Health’s award winning programs and services.”

Timothy Cooper, chair of TLC Health Network’s board of directors said, “It has been TLC Health Network’s intention all along to form a partnership with both a local health care entity and a larger, tertiary health system to ensure TLC’s future success and continued access to high quality health care for the communities we serve. At this time, we believe that an affiliation with Kaleida Health and Brooks Memorial Hospital represents the best opportunity we have for creating a superior model for delivering health care in this region for generations to come.”

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In order to help reposition the hospitals, Brooks Memorial and TLC Health Network have secured $57 million through New York State’s Essential Healthcare Provider Support Program. This program is designed to help financially distressed New York State healthcare entities with debt retirement, capital projects, turnaround and transformation initiatives.

Senator Catharine Young (R, C, I - 57th District) said, “This huge infusion of capital funding means it’s a brand new day for patients in the Southern Tier. The corner has been turned towards a bright future for Brooks Memorial and TLC Lake Shore hospitals. It was imperative to protect and preserve health care for people in our region. Saving Brooks and Lake Shore from closing has been a long and difficult endeavor that now has been won. This $57 million will transform these health facilities into a state-of-the-art integrated system affiliated with Kaleida Health that will give people the care they need and deserve, and save lives. We are very grateful for everyone working together to make this incredible partnership come to fruition.”

Brooks Memorial Hospital and TLC Health Network, like most hospitals in rural communities across the country, have been hit particularly hard with declining and aging populations, a changing payor mix, difficulty in recruiting physicians, aging facilities and significant capital challenges. Because of these challenges, they have suffered financial losses over the past five years with admission and surgical discharges declining each year as well.

The boards at Brooks Memorial and TLC Health Network understood these dynamics and have been working proactively, with the goal of preserving and enhancing access to healthcare services in Chautauqua and Cattaraugus counties. This means transforming their identities and vision, while still delivering on their mission.

The two Southern Tier hospitals and Kaleida Health will now work together to develop a full vision, plan and strategy for the Southern Tier. This transparent process will include communication, community engagement, as well as physician and employee participation to ensure that the Chautauqua and Cattaraugus community’s health care needs are met.

The opportunity to partner with Kaleida Health and its programs at places like the Gates Vascular Institute, Buffalo General Medical Center and Women & Children’s Hospital of Buffalo is to coordinate care so patients in the region will have access to appropriate care locally and be seamlessly transitioned to tertiary network care platforms when needed.

Brooks Memorial and TLC Health will also have greater coordination of care and enhanced partnerships with Erie County Medical Center’s (a partner of Kaleida Health) centers of excellence in behavioral health and transplantation, along with adult level one trauma care.
“We are incredibly pleased, honored and humbled to be able to announce these partnerships with Brooks Memorial Hospital and TLC Health Network,” said Jody Lomeo, president and CEO of Kaleida Health. “Our goal is to collaborate and enhance care for the residents of Chautauqua and Cattaraugus counties while improving access to the Kaleida Health system.”

Lomeo added, “In addition to this, I want to thank the Governor, the Department of Health, Senator Young, her colleagues in government, as well as the boards at both organizations for their leadership, hard work and vision. This is a tremendous opportunity to do what’s best for the community and the patients that we serve.”

The board of directors at Brooks Memorial approved the decision to terminate its management and employee lease agreements with UPMC at its most recent meeting. The Kaleida Health board of directors voted to approve the affiliations at their February meeting.

Based in Dunkirk, Brooks Memorial is a 65-bed not for profit hospital that serves primarily the northern Chautauqua County region. For years, it was partners with Lake Shore Health Care Center (25 beds) under TLC Health Network. TLC Health Network is a not-for-profit health system that was formed in 2002 as a result of a merger between the former Tri-County Memorial Hospital in Gowanda and Lake Shore Health Care Center in Irving, N.Y.