

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. Joe's Youth Wellness Centre Expands to Meet the Needs of Youth in Our Community

Friday, May 5, 2017 – HAMILTON, ON – Today, during Mental Health Week and in advance of National Child and Youth Mental Health Day, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton celebrated the expansion of the Youth Wellness Centre thanks to a \$1 million gift from The Joyce Family Foundation. The new space, within the existing Youth Wellness Centre, will be called *The Joyce Link* in recognition of The Joyce Family Foundation's commitment to youth in our community.

St. Joe's Youth Wellness Centre (YWC) opened two years ago in downtown Hamilton and has been honoured to serve thousands of youth living with mental health and addiction challenges. The expansion of the YWC will enable enhanced services for youth and their families, especially young people moving from children's mental health services to adult mental health services.

"The Joyce Family Foundation is proud to support education, social services and healthcare in our community, especially when it empowers the youth of today to reach their full potential in adulthood," said Steven Joyce, a member of the Board of Trustees of The Joyce Family Foundation. "The newly-expanded Youth Wellness Centre will help set even more youth on the road to long-term recovery."

Adolescence is a high-risk age for mental health and addiction challenges to develop. The teenage brain essentially remodels itself during the transitional years from childhood to adulthood, sometimes giving rise to mental health and addiction challenges that can impact a person's ability to function for the rest of their life. In fact, youth aged 15-24 experience the most mental health or substance abuse disorders of any age group and suicide is the second leading cause of death in this age range. And a staggering 3.2 million 12-19 year olds in Canada are at risk of developing depression.

"Careful research has shown that early intervention for those with emerging mental health and addiction challenges makes a very important difference in outcomes. There are real problems faced by our youth in navigating the mental health system. Planning for better care of those youth led to the creation of the Youth Wellness Centre and now to its expansion," explained Dr. David Higgins, president of St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton. "The Joyce Family Foundation gift will ensure that what began as a vision of a collaborative, stigma-free Centre built with the advice of those we serve is now truly a world-class facility and one that will have a marked impact on young people's abilities to complete their education, find and keep employment, and live safely and independently within healthy relationships."

Following the unveiling of The Joyce Link within the YWC, Ms. Sera Filice-Armenio, president and CEO of St. Joseph's Healthcare Foundation shared: "St. Joseph's Healthcare Foundation, Hospital and the Youth Wellness Centre are tremendously grateful for The Joyce Family Foundation's \$1 million gift and for their faith in the work St. Joe's does with our community's youth. This gift underscores The Joyce Family Foundation's devotion to transforming mental health and addictions care for youth in our region. They will be empowered by the expanded programs and services offered in The Joyce Link now and into the future."

-30-

About St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton and its Foundation

St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton is an acute care, teaching and research hospital with three sites and is affiliated with the Faculty of Health Sciences at McMaster University and Mohawk College. For more

information, visit: www.stjoes.ca. St. Joseph's Healthcare Foundation raises and stewards funds to support exemplary patient care, research, equipment and education at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton and in the communities we are honoured to serve. Since 1970, the Foundation has reached out to the community for donations, big and small, to help our Hospital acquire new equipment, fund patient care programs, build new facilities, and conduct vital research programs. To learn more, visit: www.stjoesfoundation.ca.

About The Joyce Family Foundation

Through its strategic philanthropic work, The Joyce Family Foundation seeks to build a legacy for the future, through ongoing leadership and innovative partnerships, by promoting improved and meaningful social, economic and emotional engagement for young Canadians. The Board of Trustees includes Ron Joyce C.M., Grant Joyce, Steven Joyce, Hon. Ed Lumley P.C., C.M., Rob MacIsaac, Aileen O'Rafferty, and Michele Thornley.

Media Contacts:

Maria Hayes
St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton
905.522.1155, ext. 33506
mhayes@stjoes.ca

Laura Pagnotta
St. Joseph's Healthcare Foundation
905-522-1155, ext. 35986
laura@stjoesfoundation.ca

Maureen O'Neill
The Joyce Family Foundation
905-332-3473
moneill@joycefamilyfoundation.com