



Carolinan HealthCare System

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The Duke Endowment Awards \$800,000 to Enhance Behavioral Health Programs

Charlotte, N.C., September 17, 2015 – Carolinas HealthCare System today announced an \$800,000 grant from The Duke Endowment to fund the integration of behavioral health services into pediatric primary care practices serving both North and South Carolina. This represents one of the largest gifts Carolinas HealthCare System has received from the organization and will enable the System to greatly extend its existing behavioral health model.

Building upon the momentum of a commitment by The Leon Levine Foundation to establish the Sandra and Leon Levine Psychiatry Residency Program at Carolinas HealthCare System (announced in late August), The Duke Endowment grant continues to demonstrate the importance of addressing area behavioral health needs.

“Our organization is dedicated to expanding programs that promote health and help prevent disease,” said Mary Piepenbring, Vice President of The Duke Endowment. “This is an opportunity to make a tremendous impact on the delivery of behavioral healthcare for children and adolescents in our region, and to establish a model that others may emulate.”

Funding from The Duke Endowment will be used to provide salary support, conduct onsite research into best practices, underwrite training and educational programs, and provide technology support. It will also enable Carolinas HealthCare System to further develop its integrated behavioral health delivery system, which currently offers inpatient, outpatient, school-based, and crisis treatment programs.

“By offering access to behavioral health services in a pediatric primary care setting, we are not only improving overall health outcomes, but we are driving down the cost of care,” said Martha Whitecotton, Senior Vice President for Behavioral Health Services, Carolinas HealthCare System. “This generous investment by The Duke Endowment enables us to implement a parallel model for pediatric practices, leveraging the hospital system’s virtual care platform and broad base of experience in child psychiatry.

Most importantly, it will help us to identify and address behavioral health issues in young patients at an early stage, before emergency treatment is required.”

Four million children and adolescents in the United States suffer from a mental disorder that causes significant issues at home, school, and with peers. In any given year, only 20 percent of these children are identified and receive mental health services.

Through virtual care, patients who are seen at a pediatric practice will now have access to behavioral health services via consults in real-time.

“Philanthropic support is essential to fulfill Carolinas HealthCare System’s mission to transform and enhance the delivery of healthcare for our patients, their families, and the community,” said Scott Kerr, President of Carolinas HealthCare Foundation. “We are deeply appreciative of this substantial grant from The Duke Endowment.”

Carolinas HealthCare System (carolinashealthcare.org), one of the nation’s leading and most innovative healthcare organizations, provides a full spectrum of healthcare and wellness programs throughout North and South Carolina. Its diverse network of care locations includes academic medical centers, hospitals, freestanding emergency departments, physician practices, surgical and rehabilitation centers, home health agencies, nursing homes and behavioral health centers, as well as hospice and palliative care services. Carolinas HealthCare System works to enhance the overall health and wellbeing of its communities through high quality patient care, education and research programs, and numerous collaborative partnerships and initiatives.

Based in Charlotte and established in 1924 by industrialist and philanthropist James B. Duke, **The Duke Endowment** is a private foundation that strengthens communities in North Carolina and South Carolina by nurturing children, promoting health, educating minds and enriching spirits. Since its founding, it has distributed more than \$3.3 billion in grants. The Endowment shares a name with Duke University and Duke Energy, but all are separate organizations.