



Unity Physician Partners, Inc.



CENTERSTONE

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Centerstone and Unity Physician Partners Form Joint Venture to Enhance Patient Care**

*Unique partnership connects primary care and mental health providers  
to improve patient outcomes and make healthcare more efficient*

**Nashville, Tenn.** – Unity Physician Partners and Centerstone Health Partners, a subsidiary of Centerstone, have joined forces to improve patient care and enhance the quality of healthcare across the U.S. The organizations have formed a joint venture that will care for medically underserved patients with physical and behavioral healthcare needs by establishing integrated care clinics. The financial terms of the partnership were not disclosed.

"We know the vital connection between physical and mental health, but for decades primary care and mental health providers have not effectively collaborated," said David C. Guth, Jr., Centerstone CEO. "Our goal with this joint venture is to eliminate this disconnect, creating a bridge that allows primary care and mental health providers to work together to improve the overall health of our patients."

Through their unique joint venture, Centerstone and Unity will explore a clinical model that addresses whole health to achieve better patient outcomes by opening integrated care offices that feature both primary care and behavioral health providers. Having these providers co-located in a common clinic will create opportunities for needed collaboration and improved care coordination.

Research has shown that 50 percent of frequent healthcare utilizers have an existing mental health condition. Because of this, primary care physicians are often called upon to address mental health issues – an area outside of their specialty. In fact, an estimated 50 percent of mental healthcare is delivered by primary care physicians. Conversely, mental health providers often struggle to address the physical health needs of their patients. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, individuals living with serious mental illness face an increased risk of having chronic medical

conditions and die an estimated 25 years earlier than those without behavioral health concerns, largely due to treatable medical conditions like heart disease and diabetes.

"Provider collaboration is essential to enhancing patient outcomes and reducing healthcare costs," said Michael Bailey, Chairman and CEO of Unity Physician Partners. "Through this joint venture, Unity and Centerstone are creating an environment in which primary care and mental health providers have access to the expertise and services they need to meet the overall health needs of their patients. Our integrated clinics will help providers better address the mental health concerns that may be exacerbating patients' physical health problems and the physical health issues that may be compromising patients' mental health."

The joint venture will begin by establishing Unity primary care physician offices in six existing Centerstone locations – four in Tennessee and two in Indiana. These clinics will open in the third quarter of 2013.

Once these locations are opened, Centerstone and Unity expect to open five to six integrated care locations every six months. Clinics will be located at existing Centerstone offices in Tennessee and Indiana, as well as new sites in these states. The joint venture also will seek to partner with providers in other states to expand into communities across the country.

"Linking the physical and mental healthcare worlds is essential to the future of healthcare," said Dr. James Geraughty from Unity. "This unique partnership between Unity and Centerstone creates a much needed infrastructure for this connection. It will enable communication among providers and help ensure better care and faster, more accurate diagnoses for patients with complex co-occurring physical and mental health conditions."

For more than 50 years, Centerstone has provided behavioral health and addiction services to people with mental illness and substance abuse disorders. Today, Centerstone is one of the nation's largest non-profit providers of community-based behavioral healthcare. In addition to Centerstone Health Partners, the organization is comprised of affiliated companies including Centerstone of Tennessee and Centerstone of Indiana, which provide mental health and addiction services to more than 75,000 adults and children each year; Centerstone Research Institute (CRI), which improves mental healthcare through innovative research and information technology; Advantage Behavioral Health, a behavioral health administrative management organization; Centerstone Foundation, the fundraising arm of the organization; and Not Alone, which offers free, confidential services and support to active-duty soldiers, veterans and their families to address the emotional and psychological effects of combat. Together, these companies employ more than 1,800 people in 130 facilities and 220 partnership locations across Indiana and Tennessee.

Unity Physician Partners is working to become the leading provider of comprehensive integrated healthcare services. With years of experience in physical health, managed care and practice management, founders Michael Bailey, James Geraughty and Jeff Bogle increasingly saw a disconnect between the treatment of physical and mental healthcare. They realized that to be truly effective, a patient—and their illnesses—must be treated as a whole. In order to address this problem, they founded Unity Physician Partners to create integrated healthcare clinics focused on whole health and collaborative treatment.

"In addition to combining our primary care and behavioral healthcare capabilities, this collaboration brings together Unity's and Centerstone's collective research, operations and technology expertise," said Debbie Cagle, CEO of Centerstone Health Partners. "We see a tremendous opportunity to transform healthcare across our country, and we hope to establish a national model for integrated

care by partnering with other like-minded organizations in the months and years to come.”

### **About Unity Physician Partners, Inc.**

Unity Physician Partners, Inc. offers primary care-based medical and ancillary healthcare services as the provider of choice for patients, physicians and communities. Through its integrated services and person-centered system of care, Unity Physician Partners employs a holistic approach to improving the quality of patient care and lowering healthcare costs. The formation of Unity brought together extensive managed care and provider based experience with its three key executives being founders and/or executives of Windsor Health Plan, HealthSpring, MedSolutions and Surgical Care Affiliates. Together, the team they form creates a strong foundation for providing care to the underserved patients with behavioral and primary healthcare needs.

### **About Centerstone**

Centerstone, a not-for-profit organization, is one of the nation's largest providers of community-based behavioral healthcare. It provides a full range of mental health, addiction and related educational services to more than 75,000 individuals of all ages each year. The organization has nearly 130 facilities and 220 partnership locations throughout Indiana and Tennessee. It also operates Centerstone Foundation, Centerstone Research Institute, Advantage Behavioral Health, Not Alone and Centerstone Health Partners. For more information about Centerstone, please visit [www.centerstone.org](http://www.centerstone.org).

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