



*We Will Empower Bold Change to Elevate  
Human Flourishing.<sup>SM</sup>*

For Immediate Release  
Sept. 12, 2024

Contact: Richele Keas  
rkeas@chausa.org

### **CHA Responds to Biased KFF Health News Article**

*Statement by Sr. Mary Haddad, RSM, President and Chief Executive Officer,  
Catholic Health Association of the United States*

ST. LOUIS – “Today's article by KFF Health News is an example of activist journalism that seeks to disparage Catholic health care by making sweeping generalizations based on the opinions of a few critics. The article is riddled with unsupported innuendo and cites only data from known anti-Catholic health care activists whose findings have been widely criticized by academic experts and leading health care providers, including internationally renowned systems that are not Catholic.

“The article does quote a critic who stated that Catholic health care providers set high standards for themselves – that is true. We constantly seek ways to improve the health and well-being of our patients and communities, which is consistent with our mission and long-standing commitment to deliver high-quality, affordable, and compassionate care for everyone.

"CHA provided KFF with multiple examples of how Catholic health care organizations fulfill their missions in caring for their patients and underserved communities across the nation. The article failed to report that Catholic hospitals on average have financial assistance policies that offer free or discounted care to individuals earning up to \$52,000 per year. The article also ignores the fact that Catholic hospitals collectively provide \$15.84 billion annually in Community Benefit investments. These investments are reported to the IRS annually and reflect Catholic health care's commitment to community programs that address such issues as homelessness, food insecurity, addiction, violence prevention, mental health, and health disparities. The Lown report cited in the article does not fully account for all Community Benefit investments made by non-profit hospitals under the legal definition of Community Benefit and required reporting on the IRS 990, Schedule H.

“Catholic health care has a long history of providing care to everyone, regardless of their ability to pay for care. Claims that we do not do enough to care for vulnerable patients are not supported by the facts and fail to acknowledge an overall failing health care system, especially with regard to health insurance coverage. All of the nearly 650 Catholic hospitals in the United States care for patients who have no insurance or who rely on Medicaid and other means-tested programs. Last year, Catholic hospitals had more than \$8 billion in unreimbursed costs for the care of Medicaid patients alone, which the Lown report again fails to include. This financial burden occurred at a time when the vast majority of Catholic hospitals had a net negative operating margin.

"Catholic health care has been and remains a strong advocate for improving our health care delivery system so that everyone has access to affordable, quality care. Unfortunately, because our nation's health care system is deeply flawed even those with insurance coverage often face high deductibles and out-of-pocket costs. In fact, recent surveys indicate that nearly half of Americans report they are unable to afford

their deductibles. Meanwhile, our nation's public health system is woefully underfunded, which requires local hospitals to serve as the safety net provider in their communities.”

“Catholic health care institutions in the United States remain true to our origins and the missions upon which we were founded through our ongoing commitment to serving those most in need. This commitment is demonstrated every day through the care we provide to our patients and communities.”

###

*The Catholic Health Association of the United States is the national leadership organization of the Catholic health ministry, representing the largest nonprofit provider of health care services in the nation.*

- *1 in 7 patients in the U.S. is cared for in a Catholic hospital each day.*
- *Catholic health care, which includes more than 2,200 hospitals, nursing homes, long-term care facilities, systems, sponsors, and related organizations, serves the full continuum of health care across our nation.*
- *Learn more at [www.chausa.org](http://www.chausa.org).*