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KIMBERLY HOBSON NAMED CEO OF SOUTH SIDE HEALTHY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

CHICAGO, IL – The South Side Healthy Community Organization (SSHCO) Board of Directors announced today that it has named Kimberly Hobson as its first Chief Executive Officer. The SSHCO is a not-for-profit organization comprised of 13 health care entities – safety net hospitals, health systems and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) – working together to better connect existing health organizations, increase access to care, address some of the most challenging health issues its communities face, and ultimately, ensure stronger, healthier communities across the South Side of Chicago.

The SSHCO is one of eight collaboratives across the state to receive significant health transformation funding from the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services in July of 2021. The state funds were a result of The Hospital and Healthcare Transformation Bill that unanimously passed the Illinois legislature in January of 2021 and was signed into law. The bill dedicates \$150 million each year for the next five years to address health equity by sustainably improving access and outcomes.

For decades, the 900,000 residents of the South Side of Chicago have experienced health disparities ranging from materially higher disease incidence and comorbidities to significantly lower life expectancy. The health disparities reflect a history of racial inequities and underinvestment – both of which contribute to a fragmented healthcare delivery landscape with limited resources.

Based on extensive community engagement and input shared in virtual townhalls, small-group listening sessions, a community-wide survey and more, the SSHCO is focusing on increasing primary and specialty care access, preventive and chronic care management, care coordination and management, provider collaboration, ongoing community engagement, and a connected digital and technological infrastructure.

Hobson has deep roots in health care and knows well the health disparities faced on Chicago's South Side, having served as Executive Director of the SouthSide Healthcare Collaborative and Strategic Affiliations for the University of Chicago Medicine and previous leadership positions with Advocate Health Care, Mercy Hospital and Humana Health Plan. She most recently served as CEO of JourneyCare, the largest non-profit hospice and palliative care organization in Illinois where she rebuilt the organization to yield more financial and operational sustainability, leading to its \$85M sale in February of 2022. Hobson earned her Master of Business

Administration from Purdue University and is a graduate of the Chicago Management Institute at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business.

“Kimberly has the leadership skills and passion needed to carry this critically important health transformation mission forward,” said SSHCO Board Chairman Rashard Johnson, President of Advocate Trinity and South Suburban Hospitals. “Following decades of devastating inequities, it is truly remarkable to have our health care organizations coming together in a coordinated, collaborative and, most importantly, sustainable effort toward improving the health of our South Side residents. Our goal was to secure a CEO who shared our drive for change, had strong health care experience and knows the South Side of Chicago -- in Kimberly, we found all three.”

The SSHCO plans to hire additional primary care physicians, community health workers and nurse care coordinators; increase access to specialists; build community partnerships around social determinants of health like access to food and transportation; establish a Community Advisory Council and start developing a technology platform that will connect all South Side healthcare providers.

In fact, hiring is currently underway for the first phase of what will be up to 48 community health workers as well as 20 nurse care coordinators by the end of 2022 who will ultimately be spread among the 13 organization members, including Advocate Trinity Hospital, Beloved Community Family Wellness Center, Chicago Family Health Center, Christian Community Health Center, Friend Health, Jackson Park Hospital, Near North Health, The New Roseland Community Hospital, St. Bernard Hospital, Sinai Chicago – Holy Cross Hospital, South Shore Hospital, TCA Health, and University of Chicago Medicine.

The SSHCO is governed by a board of directors made up of one member from each of the 13 healthcare partners and three community leaders. In her new position, Hobson will become the 17th and final member of the board.

“I am ready to hit the ground running, building upon the strong foundation started by the SSHCO board who have been standing up this transformative organization with the tremendous funding support from the state,” said Hobson. “I am honored to play a role in this work that will be lifechanging for the residents on the South Side as we strive to close the health equity gap that has existed for far too long.”

To learn more about SSHCO visit: www.southsidehealthycommunity.com

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