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Alaska Regional Named Local Affiliate of The Jason Foundation, Inc. for Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention *National Organization and Alaska Regional Partner to Meet Community Needs*

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA, February 7, 2017 - Alaska Regional and The Jason Foundation, Inc. (JFI) have partnered to designate a JFI Affiliate Office dedicated to increasing awareness and prevention of youth suicide. The office at the hospital in Anchorage offers free educational materials and training programs to parents, teachers, students, churches and other community organizations.

Suicide is the #1 leading cause of death among youth ages 10-24 in Alaska. According to the CDC's 2015 [National Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#), 20.1 percent of Alaska youth surveyed reported having "seriously considered" suicide in the past year and 10.7 percent reported having "attempted suicide."

JFI believes that awareness and education are the first steps to prevention. Therefore, the organization provides students, parents and teachers the tools and resources to help identify and help at-risk youth.

"We are excited about collaborating with Alaska Regional," said Clark Flatt, President of JFI. "The hospital already has begun to support Alaska's families by offering programs and resources statewide." Heather Plucinski, Alaska Regional's JFI Representative said, "The opportunity for increased awareness, education and prevention in Alaska is huge. This is a valuable partnership for the people of our state."

The "Promise for Tomorrow" curriculum is intended for students in grade 7 – 12 as a part of school health or wellness classes. An especially useful resource for youths is a smart-phone app called "A Friend Asks." JFI also offers programs for parents and other adults to address youth suicide by providing strategies for awareness and prevention.

In 2012, The Jason Flatt Act of Alaska was signed into law. This legislation requires mandatory youth suicide awareness and prevention training for each teacher, administrator, counselor, and specialist who provide services to public school students. The Act has been enacted in 19 states across the nation with additional states looking to introduce legislation in 2017.

About The Jason Foundation: JFI is one of the nation's leading non-profit organizations dedicated to fighting youth suicide. Headquartered in Hendersonville, TN, it was founded in 1997 after the tragic death of Jason Flatt, the 16-year-old son of Clark Flatt. Alaska Regional Hospital's parent company, Hospital Corporation of America (HCA), has been a National Community Affiliate for JFI since 2014 with Affiliate Offices throughout the US. For more information, please visit JFI's website: www.jasonfoundation.com.