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**SUMMA HEALTH SYSTEM AND MERCY MEDICAL CENTER SHARE NEW OWNERSHIP OF OHIO HEALTH CHOICE**

(AKRON, OHIO) – Ohio Health Choice, one of Ohio’s largest statewide PPO networks, is under new ownership effective October 21, 2005. Summa Health System, one of the largest organized delivery systems in Ohio, joins Mercy Medical Center in Canton in ownership of Ohio Health Choice.

“We believe as an organized delivery system, we can effectively improve the quality and value of healthcare in our community,” said Thomas J. Strauss, president and CEO of Summa Health System. “With Ohio Health Choice as an entity of Summa Health System, we believe it can provide more cost-effective access to healthcare for more people.”

Ohio Health Choice, which was the first PPO in Ohio, includes 198 hospitals, 7,932 primary care providers, 18,022 specialists and has 161,000 members and 94 third party administrators. St. Vincent Charity Hospital in Cleveland, a health care facility of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine, established Ohio Health Choice in 1982. The PPO was brought into Stark County through Mercy Medical Center soon after. In 1999, Ohio Health Choice became a wholly-owned subsidiary of the joint venture of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine Health System and University Hospitals Health System of Cleveland, which includes Mercy Medical Center.

“Mercy Medical Center values its ownership and longevity with Ohio Health Choice,” commented Thomas E. Ceconi, president and CEO of Mercy Medical Center. “It is a well-established network with an excellent reputation and valuable brand. We look forward to working with Summa in making Ohio Health Choice available to even more people.”

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### About Summa Health System

Summa Health System is one of the largest organized delivery systems in Ohio. The system encompasses a network of hospitals, community-based health centers, a health plan, a physician-hospital organization, an entrepreneurial entity, research and medical education and a foundation. Summa is renowned for excellence in patient care and for exceptional approaches to healthcare delivery.

### About Mercy Medical Center

Mercy Medical Center, part of a not-for-profit joint venture of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine Health System and University Hospitals Health System, operates a 476-bed hospital that serves Stark, Carroll, Wayne, Holmes and Tuscarawas Counties and parts of Southeastern Ohio. It has 550 physicians on its Medical Staff and employs 2,500 people. Mercy operates outpatient health centers in North Canton, Carrollton, Jackson Township, Lake Township, Dover and Louisville. For more information, see [www.cantonmercy.com](http://www.cantonmercy.com).

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