****

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contact:**

[Insert Name and Contact Info]

**Under embargo until Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2017, 11:00 a.m. CST**

**Saunders Medical Center partnerships gain national attention**

*Collaboration for Health Coach program featured as case study in rural health strategy*

[Insert Date] – Wahoo, Neb. – Since 2012, Saunders Medical Center has been developing and expanding local partnerships to provide health coaching services for the community. Now, that partnership model is being presented in a best practice case study to inspire other hospital leaders in rural communities across the U.S.

The collaborative relationship that created the Health Coach program is featured in the *2017* [*Compendium*](https://www.bryanhealth.com/bryan-rural-services/thought-leadership-expertise/compendium-hospital-community-partnerships/) *of Best Practices in Rural Health Hospital-Community Partnerships*,a publication ofBryan Health. It is one of 12 case studies that illustrate what is possible when hospitals and community organizations share resources, skills and services for a greater impact on population health.

At Saunders Medical Center, Health Coaches partner internally with other hospital departments and externally with local organizations, including EDGE Wellness, Family Service Lincoln, Saunders County Prevention Coalition, Wahoo Civic Center, Wahoo Senior Center and Three Rivers Public Health Department. Health Coaches serve as an educational resource and a personal advocate for a patient’s overall health.

The program, which is available free of charge to everyone in Wahoo and surrounding communities, has produced positive results, particularly in its four primary areas of focus: mental health, breast health, diabetes and obesity.

“By collaborating with local organizations, we provide a holistic approach to care,” said Julie Rezac, chief operating officer at Saunders Medical Center. “Our Health Coaches have helped immensely to further this mission.”

**About Saunders Medical Center**

Saunders Medical Center is a 16-bed critical access hospital in Wahoo, Neb., with both inpatient and outpatient services. The people of Saunders Medical Center take pride in providing the very best care through the clinics, hospital, long-term care and ancillary services. They are a not-for-profit facility dedicated to community care.

**About Bryan Health**

Bryan Health is a Nebraska-governed, nonprofit health system that cares for patients, educates tomorrow’s health care providers and motivates communities with fitness and health programs. With an award-winning network of doctors, hospitals and medical providers, Bryan Health offers effective care, works with industry leaders to introduce leading-edge, proven treatments, and serves rural communities in four states through outreach clinics, mobile services and telehealth care. The health system includes Bryan Medical Center, Bryan Heart, Bryan Foundation, Bryan Physician Network, Bryan Enterprises, Bryan College of Health Sciences, Bryan Health Connect, Crete Area Medical Center and Merrick Medical Center. Bryan Health is also the sponsoring organization for the Heartland Health Alliance, Bryan CAH Network, and has management agreements with Clarinda Regional Health Center and Saunders Medical Center.

###