



## **Providence Western Montana Region and St. Patrick Hospital committed to exceptional care in challenging times.**

**Missoula, MT – November 22, 2013** -- As the Providence Western Montana Region and St. Patrick Hospital work to reduce expenses, it won't compromise the exceptional patient care the hospital has provided Western Montana for more than 140 years, Jeff Fee, president of Providence's Western Montana Region said today.

"As hospitals and clinics across the nation are figuring out how to adapt to a new model for healthcare, we're all facing the same challenges," said Fee. "We're hearing that there are rumors about cuts and layoffs and want to speak directly to our community and employees with facts. We, like the rest of the healthcare industry, have financial pressures, but we're working together to manage those pressures without negatively affecting patient care."

Toward that end, Fee laid out the challenges and opportunities:

- Providence Western Montana Region is aggressively working to save nearly \$5 million between now and the end of March, 2014. Each department is responsible for finding efficiencies, eliminating duplication and being more effective without compromising patient care. There have been some program restructuring and targeted reductions in the past month that have impacted staff.
- There will be no across the board layoff. As the healthcare delivery system changes, new jobs will be created, many jobs will change and some jobs will go away. There is no avoiding this. As new jobs have been added over the past year—some in association with our new electronic medical record system—we've had to make tough decisions around functions and positions we can no longer afford. Simply put, when a new job is created, we either have to fund that new job with increased revenue or we have to

offset it with other expenses. Given that the healthcare industry is experiencing tremendous pressures on its collective revenue stream, most of the time we have to find the offset with other positions. It's a painful transition, but one that cannot be avoided if we expect an improved healthcare delivery system that is also more affordable.

- Life Flight is an extraordinarily important service to the Western Montana area. The rapidly changing, competitive landscape of patient transport coupled with the financial pressures the industry is facing has led many health systems to look at alternative models to ensure continuity of safe, high quality, sustainable patient transport. St. Patrick Hospital is absolutely committed to ensuring Western Montana continues to enjoy exactly that.

“We intend to remain leaders in the health of our community for the next 140 years,” Fee said, “but the way we do it will change. Our industry and our team are accustomed to challenges, and we’ll meet these head on, all the while staying true to our fundamental Mission.”