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**For More Information, Contact:**

David Kelly, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Rochester

[davek@rmhcrochester.org](mailto:davek@rmhcrochester.org)

585-442-5437

## **Ronald McDonald House Charities of Rochester opens new Mental Health & Wellness Family Lounge at URMC**

*First of its kind within the Ronald McDonald House organization across the U.S.*

**ROCHESTER, NY, November 2, 2018** – Ronald McDonald House Charities of Rochester (RMHCR) is opening a new family lounge dedicated to supporting the nearly 1,000 families with children receiving mental health services through UR Medicine Mental Health and Wellness and UR Medicine’s Golisano Children’s Hospital on an annual basis. The Mental Health & Wellness Family Lounge, located at the University of Rochester Medical Center, is the very first of its kind within the entire Ronald McDonald House organization across the United States.

“We are thrilled to be the leader in bringing our family-centered care model to pediatric mental health services at URMC. This is a well-documented, unmet need in our community, and we are dedicated to supporting all families regardless of why, or where, they receive their care,” said Kelly McCormick-Sullivan, President & CEO of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Rochester. “The Mental Health and Wellness Lounge is an important extension of our long-time partnership with URMC, and we view this as a first step in a long-term commitment to pediatric mental health.”

The lounge will offer families a place to rest and relax while enjoying complimentary coffee, cold beverages and healthy snacks. The lounge will also feature a play area and laundry facilities for families. The hours of operation are from 9:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. In addition, the lounge will be staffed with members from the RMHCR team, who bring kindness, compassion and empathy to the overall family experience.

“Families who use our services are already going through something challenging,” said Michael Scharf, M.D., Chief of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in the URMC Department of Psychiatry. “With this new lounge, they will have a space that offers comfort – both physical and emotional – allowing them to focus all of their energy and attention on their child’s treatment.”

RMHCR recognizes the URMC Department of Psychiatry’s Advisory Council of Consumers, made up of patient and family members who advocated for this space, and the Friends of Strong Memorial Hospital, which also is supporting the project.

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## **MEDIA INVITE**

*The media is invited to the ribbon-cutting for the Mental Health & Wellness Lounge on **Monday, Nov. 5 at 10:00**. Members of the media will be able to speak with staff of Ronald McDonald House Charities and the medical community who will be involved in the new lounge. Tours of the new lounge will also be given.*

*Please park in the [Saunders Research Building Lot #14](#) on Crittenden Boulevard and walk directly across the street to the UR Medicine Mental Health and Wellness entrance. A URMC representative will meet you.*

### **About Ronald McDonald House Charities of Rochester**

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Rochester (RMHCR) supports the health and wellness of children and their families through innovative programming, supportive services and community partnerships. RMHCR has provided lodging, comfort, and support for families of children receiving medical attention in Rochester's health care facilities since 1990. Our services include the Westmoreland House which provides free lodging, meals, and transportation to families of children receiving medical care at Golisano Children's Hospital, the House Within the Hospital, a comfortable living facility located just minutes away from the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, and the Ronald McDonald House Family Room, which welcomes pediatric patients and their families looking for a break from the hospital room. In the past year, RMHCR has opened a Family Room at Rochester Regional Hospital that provides respite for families of pediatric patients at Rochester General Hospital and launched a hospitality cart that provides healthy snacks to outpatients who visit the Golisano Children's Pediatric Practice at Strong. Our local organization is part of a network of nearly 350 chapters in more than 50 countries.