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**EXCELA HEALTH COMPLETES RESIDENCY MATCH PROCESS,
PREPARES TO WELCOME CLASS OF 2015**

LATROBE, PA, March 17, 2012 ...Excelsa Health prepares to welcome a new class of family medicine residents this July, having just completed the National Residency Matching Program process. The six individuals become part of a three-year training program based at Latrobe Hospital.

The National Resident Matching Program is a private, not-for-profit corporation established in 1952 to provide a uniform date of appointment to positions in graduate medical education in the United States. The process provides an impartial venue for matching applicants' preferences for residency positions with program directors' preferences for applicants. Each year approximately 16,000 U.S. allopathic medical school seniors and 15,000 graduates of osteopathic, Canadian or foreign medical schools compete for approximately 24,000 residency positions.

The incoming residents will be arriving from points east and west, including Lake Erie and Philadelphia Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, as well Ross University, Saint George University and the University of California San Diego School of Medicine. These physicians were among 2,263 applicants from allopathic and osteopathic schools looking to train in Excelsa Health's program.

"We are very pleased such a diverse collection of students will be coming to Latrobe for their residency training," noted Mike Semelka, DO, program

director for the Excelsa Health Latrobe Hospital Family Medicine Residency. "These individuals have selected Latrobe based on our outstanding reputation for an excellent academic environment. Their experiences will bring a unique mix of perspectives and influences to our program."

Excelsa Health has been training family physicians for more than 30 years. Many of the 150-plus graduates of the three-year program which began in 1974, have remained on staff at Excelsa Health, electing to practice in southwestern Pennsylvania. Likewise, Excelsa Health is fortunate to retain graduates as faculty members affiliated with Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia.

Many experts in the health care field agree that where medical students choose to do their residency is often more important than where they do their undergraduate work. "A residency is a preparatory program between medical school and being an independent physician," Dr. Semelka said. "It's where physicians form their approach in taking care of patients and how they manage the health care system."

With each passing year, Excelsa Health finds a growing number of residency applicants already familiar with the opportunities available at Latrobe having completed rotations in the health system during their third or fourth year of medical school.

"Many of these students had a chance to come here during their undergraduate studies, and they saw what we could do here and they wanted to come back," added Dr. Semelka