FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

North Valley Hospital and Kalispell Regional Healthcare Begin Process of Exploring a Collaborative Relationship

WHITEFISH, MT - July 20, 2015: The Governing Boards of North Valley Hospital and Kalispell Regional Healthcare have announced that they have begun exploring how to best deliver health care to Northwest Montana and the Flathead Valley.

North Valley Hospital and Kalispell Regional Healthcare recognize that health care is changing at an accelerated pace. This joint effort comes at a time when hospitals are working to ensure the overall health of our communities, in addition to taking care of individual instances of health care needs. Hospitals across the nation are also challenged by increasing costs to deliver quality health care while complying with rising regulations. It has become apparent to the Governing Boards that North Valley Hospital, Kalispell Regional Healthcare, and the communities they serve can benefit from some form of collaboration to deliver quality health care even better than they do today.

“We are committed to continuing improvement in the way health care is delivered to our local communities,” says Gwenda Jonas, MD, Chair of the Kalispell Regional Healthcare Board of Directors. “We believe that by working even more closely together we can better manage the access to, quality of, and efficiency of health care services in this region.”

The hospitals’ Boards of Directors have created a joint task force to explore these opportunities.

The organizations have agreed to follow the principles outlined below to guide the task force discussions and develop recommendations:

A. Support a formal working relationship between the two organizations.
B. Preserve each hospital’s unique business model, cultural identity, and community philanthropic support base.
C. Facilitate innovative collaboration among physicians, clinical, administrative, and technical staff; and promote the sharing of “best practices.”
D. Implement efficiencies among the hospitals that benefit the overall health care effectiveness, while promoting financial soundness.

“Collaboration between the organizations to meet the health care needs of our communities is not new,” says Steve Stahlberg, Chair of the North Valley Hospital Board of Directors. “North Valley Hospital and Kalispell Regional Healthcare already
work together in a variety of efforts to provide a greater depth and breadth of services locally.”

These joint efforts include:

- The recruitment and sharing of physicians, including hospitalists, anesthesiologists, radiologists, surgeons, and a variety of other specialists and clinical staff;
- Shared services, including nuclear medicine, cardio/pulmonary rehabilitation, cardiac testing, and telemedicine;
- Efforts to facilitate electronic use of health-related information;
- Development of a Community Health Needs Assessment with the Flathead City-County Health Department to take a coordinated approach to identifying and addressing the area’s health care needs;
- Joint education and training to medical providers and staff.

The joint task force of the organizations will continue to meet on a regular basis and expects that initial recommendations will be ready by the end of the year. More information will be released as it is available.