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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Horizon Health Services partners with Cleveland Clinic on Customer Care Initiatives**

**Buffalo, NY (August 6, 2013)** – During May and June, Horizon introduced an agency-wide customer service program designed to set a higher standard of conduct for employees, and to establish a universal standard for staff communication. The “S.T.A.R.T with Heart” and “Respond with H.E.A.R.T.” programs teach employees how to communicate with openness, compassion, care and sensitivity. Improved methods of communication enhance the quality of employee interaction with clients and their families, referral sources, community stakeholders and each other.

These two programs were developed at the Cleveland Clinic, a non-profit, multi-specialty academic medical center in Cleveland, Ohio, that has been highly successful in improving patient satisfaction. Horizon recently established an affiliation with the Cleveland Clinic that permitted these programs to be implemented at Horizon.

During interactive learning sessions attended by all Horizon staff members, “S.T.A.R.T” training focused on increasing staff’s awareness of the client’s perspective and experience. This portion of the training emphasized the importance of personal responsibility. The “Respond with H.E.A.R.T.” training provided employees the skills needed to consistently and effectively address concerns expressed by clients, families,

co-workers and others. Employees practiced the skills in small groups using real-life situations, role-play and group discussions.

The programs focus on enhancing Horizon's culture of excellence by allowing staff to gain understanding of the client experience. Upon implementing these programs, Horizon has taken another step forward to enhance its culture of excellence by improving customer service, enhancing the effectiveness of clinical services, and improving overall client experience.

### **About Horizon Health Services**

Horizon Health Services is the largest and most comprehensive provider of fully integrated mental health and chemical dependency treatment and recovery services, with 17 outpatient sites serving Erie, Niagara and Genesee counties. In addition Horizon Village, a 50-bed inpatient facility operates in Niagara County, where a Veterans Treatment Facility is under construction. Horizon's Primary Care and Wellness Center which is adjacent to Horizon Village offers medical, psychiatric and recreational services to all campus residents. 2013 marks the fifth consecutive year Horizon has been named one of the *50 Best Companies to Work for in New York, and Business First Best Place to Work*. For more information about Horizon, visit [www.horizon-health.org](http://www.horizon-health.org).

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