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Patrick J. Kennedy to Keynote Hackensack Meridian Health Symposium on Opioid Epidemic

Eatontown, NJ / October 24, 2017 – The Department of Psychiatry at Hackensack Meridian Health Jersey Shore University Medical Center will present *Substance Use Disorders in 2017: Tackling the Opioid Epidemic & More* on Wednesday, October 25, from 7:45 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Sheraton Eatontown Hotel. Patrick J. Kennedy, former Rhode Island Congressman and international advocate for parity in mental health and substance use disorder treatment, will deliver the keynote address.

According to Hackensack Meridian Health, patients with substance use disorders are reaching an epidemic level in the area. The symposium will guide health professionals in addressing this crisis by providing current evidence-based approaches for the treatment of substance use disorders, including psychosocial and pharmacologic interventions.

Attendees will be better prepared to:

- Describe risk factors, screening methods, prevention strategies and trends in substance use disorders
- Discuss the DSM 5 diagnosis and clinical presentation of substance use disorders
- Explain the current status of legalization of marijuana in New Jersey
- Identify the unique aspects of substance abuse treatment in an adolescent population
- Effectively treat substance use disorders using evidence-based therapeutic and psychopharmacologic interventions
- Recognize the diagnostic and treatment concerns specific to patients in the perinatal period

To register, please visit www.MeridianHealth.com/Psychiatry.

The October 25 event is part of a substance use disorders lecture series made possible through support from the Christopher Center for Mental Health and Wellness. The Christopher Center will be located in the new HOPE Tower upon its opening in early 2018, and will provide for the coordination of a broad range of primary care, mental health, and substance use disorders services at Jersey Shore University Medical Center.

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About Patrick J. Kennedy:

Former Congressman Patrick J. Kennedy (D-R.I.) is a lifelong mental health advocate and member of the President's Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis. He is the founder of The Kennedy Forum, a convening think tank tackling mental health and addiction issues and co-founder of One Mind, a global leader in open science collaboration for brain research. In 2015, he co-authored *A Common Struggle*, a New York Times best seller, which details his personal journey and provides a roadmap for the future of mental health policy. Mr. Kennedy is pushing for full enforcement of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008. He was the lead sponsor of this groundbreaking legislation, which requires health plans cover mental health, eating disorder, and addiction care health benefits the same way they cover physical health benefits. To learn about Mr. Kennedy's efforts, please visit www.patrickjkennedy.net.