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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MMCRI Welcomes Sen. Collins for Research Briefing, Tour

Visit follows \$20M National Institutes of Health grant award establishing Northern New England Clinical and Translational Research Network

SCARBOROUGH, Maine – U.S. Sen. Susan Collins toured the Maine Medical Center Research Institute (MMCRI) on Friday, following the recent award of a \$20 million National Institutes of Health grant to the institute and its partners to establish the Northern New England Clinical and Translational Research Network.

Funding from this award will help researchers develop and implement innovative medical treatments for many chronic diseases prevalent in our region including cancer, heart disease, obesity, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and substance abuse. Research activities will also focus on defining optimal methods of prevention and health care delivery in rural environments, where approximately 60 percent of Maine's population resides.

The consortium is comprised of MMCRI and its partners, the University of Vermont and the University of Southern Maine, and will feature collaborations with researchers at Tufts University School of Medicine and the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth.

MMCRI investigators briefed Sen. Collins on the consortium during her visit, and she toured several research labs housed at the institute's Scarborough campus.

"This \$20 million grant will help spur the advancement of treatments, means of prevention, and cures for diseases that affect nearly every American family. The establishment of this consortium is a true credit to the skilled scientists at the Maine Medical Center Research Institute and its partnering institutions, including the University of Southern Maine," said Sen. Collins. "As a senior member of the Appropriations Committee, I have strongly advocated for increased funding for biomedical research. By helping to foster collaboration among researchers and implement innovative medical treatments, this investment will help us conquer so many diseases that take both an emotional and financial toll." Clifford Rosen, M.D., Director of the Center for Clinical and Translational Research at Maine Medical Center Research Institute, and Gary Stein Ph.D., Director of the University of Vermont Cancer Center and Chair of the Department of

Biochemistry at the University of Vermont College of Medicine, will co-lead the program. This consortium joins nine other NIH-supported regional networks across the country.

Another key purpose of the network is training the next generation of biomedical scientists, physicians and nurses in research methodology to attract additional research support to the region. Such initiatives are critical in meeting the healthcare needs of the region's aging population in an era when ground-breaking medical treatments are rapidly being developed.

About Maine Medical Center

Maine Medical Center (MMC), recognized as the number-one ranked hospital in Maine by U.S. News and World Report for 2016-2017, is a complete health care resource for the people of greater Portland and the entire state, as well as northern New England. Incorporated in 1864, MMC is the state's largest and only academic medical center, licensed for 637 beds, employing nearly 6,500 people, and dedicated to its mission that includes educating tomorrow's care givers and researching new ways to provide care. MMC's unique role as both a community hospital and an academic referral center requires an unparalleled depth and breadth of services, including nationally recognized educational programs and a world-class biomedical research Institute. As a nonprofit institution, Maine Medical Center provides nearly 23 percent of all the charity care delivered in Maine. MMC is a member of the MaineHealth system, a growing family of health care services in northern New England. For more information, visit www.mmc.org.

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