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## **First Choice Health Announces Appointment of New President and CEO, Jaja Okigwe**

*Effective immediately, First Choice Health honors former CEO Ken Hamm's 12-year tenure and welcomes Okigwe as a visionary leader in the healthcare industry.*

**SEATTLE – May 15, 2018** – First Choice Health announced today that following a successful 12-year tenure as the company's President and Chief Executive Officer, Ken Hamm has officially retired. Effective immediately, First Choice Health also announced that Jaja Okigwe, former Senior Vice President of Strategic Development for Premera Blue Cross, has been selected by the Board of Directors and hired to assume the leadership position as the company's new President and Chief Executive Officer.

With 20 years of healthcare industry experience, Okigwe brings with him a portfolio of expertise that will drive strategy and innovation for First Choice Health, playing an integral role in guiding the ownership and company through its next phase of profitable growth.

"First Choice Health is well positioned to increase its impact on the marketplace and the time is now," says Clyde Walker, the newly appointed chairman of the Board of Directors. "Okigwe was selected based on his history of helping major industry leaders outline and navigate a clear pathway towards customer care and profitable growth. We are confident he will help us define a future vision that honors our past while implementing plans and actions to guide us on the next path in this ever-changing healthcare landscape."

Jaja graduated from Harvard College in 1992 and received his MBA from HEC in Paris, France in 1997. He served as a Manager for Deloitte Consulting before transitioning to the McKesson Corporation, working as the Vice President of Business Development. There, he developed and launched a new indigent drug reimbursement service line in partnership with several large pharmaceutical companies, resulting in a \$10 million profit within the program's first year.

In 2004, Okigwe moved on to Premera Blue Cross serving as Director of Operations, then Vice President of Special Products Development where he led the strategic planning for Stop Loss that resulted in a 20 percent increase in new business. In 2007, he assumed the role of Vice President of Strategic Development and in 2014, was promoted to Senior Vice President of that same division. He was instrumental in leading corporate strategic planning efforts across the organization, helping the company identify and support annual key initiatives and progress monitoring, while overseeing the development of Premera's innovation program and health innovation laboratory.

"After Premera, I wanted to work on initiatives that had a more direct impact on people's health," said Okigwe. "What attracted me to First Choice Health is the ability I have here to make larger-scale changes that can drive growth and

serve our customers far into the future. In this new role, I can help more people in so many ways and – I couldn't look away from that opportunity.”

### ***Celebrating Ken Hamm's Leadership at First Choice Health***

Originally joining First Choice Health in 2000, Hamm became President and CEO in 2006. Known for his forward-thinking and financial stewardship, Hamm tripled both the benefit claims administration and employee assistance program. He paved the way for First Choice Health to begin partnering effectively with owners and other health service providers in the community such as MultiCare, Connected Care and the Puget Sound High Value Network.

“Ken was responsible for facilitating key partnerships and expansion efforts as well as being responsible for the company's increase in community stewardship and support,” said Walker. “We donated more than \$500,000 in 2017 to organizations such as Childhaven, the Alliance for Education and the WSMA Foundation for Health Care Improvement. This is a testament to Ken's belief in giving back to the community.”

### ***First Choice Continues to Adapt and Innovate in the Ever-Changing Health Landscape***

First Choice provides a wide and growing array of products and services in Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and select areas of North Dakota and South Dakota. The First Choice Health Administration offerings include custom networks, flexible plan designs, and medical management. The First Choice EAP offers counseling and referral services to complement health benefit-oriented services and serves a wide variety of clients (including employers, health insurers, and providers) in the Northwestern U.S. ranging in size from small employer groups to large organizations.

First Choice Health's ownership and governance model is unique, with a combination of individual physicians, corporate healthcare delivery system leaders and local business leaders overseeing the organization. This structure presents a valuable opportunity for strategic growth, and the key to capturing that success will be in setting an actionable strategy that leverages the solid infrastructure, core competencies and key relationships of the organization.

“Jaja Okigwe is well positioned to usher in an era of change, enhancing current relationships with local and regional healthcare systems, increasing membership enrollment, and supporting the team in developing and delivering new products to the market,” said Ken Hamm. “He understands the market, has a breadth of experience behind him, and most importantly, his heart is in the right place.”

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### **About First Choice Health**

First Choice Health, based in Seattle, Wash., is a dynamic leader in the Northwest health services community. Originating as a PPO Network in 1985, First Choice eventually grew to serve all of Washington and the Northwestern U.S., including Oregon, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and select areas of North Dakota and South Dakota. As part of that growth, First Choice began offering third party administration, medical management and employee assistance program services. Today, First Choice has approx. 560,000 members utilizing its PPO network. The organization supports more than 80,000 lives with its third-party administration services. As a hospital and physician-owned provider who services the medium to large group regional market, First Choice continues to be well positioned to adapt to the changing healthcare landscape. With a flexible systems architecture, First Choice develops custom solutions and integrated services tailored to meet the needs of all clients. For more information, visit First Choice online at [www.fchn.com](http://www.fchn.com).