

Mercy plans to buy 11 Michigan nursing homes

Farmington Hills-based Mercy Services for Aging (MSA) has announced an agreement to buy 11 Michigan nursing homes, one each in Detroit, Pontiac, Battle Creek, Warren, Fraser, Royal Oak, Hamtramck, Jackson and Grand Haven and two in Muskegon.

The announcement was made Nov.

27 by MSA chair Laurence Branch and MSA president Stephanie McCutcheon. MSA is a subsidiary of Mercy Health Services, Farmington Hills.

"We express the Sisters of Mercy's historic concern for the elderly through this acquisition," Branch said. "We now have a significant op-

portunity to enhance the quality of life for many older adults."

THE NURSING homes, which will work closely with local Mercy hospitals, complement Mercy's existing efforts in care for the aging, McCutcheon said.

The decision to buy also supports

Mercy Health Services' overall strategy to develop "community health care systems."

These systems are comprised of an array of health and related services, coordinated by a single provider. People in local communities can choose from among the services,

based on their own changing needs.

MERCY'S SERVICES for older adults span the needs of the whole person, said Gerald Bruen, executive vice president of MSA.

"We describe this as a 'continuum of care' which is comprised of residential, social, wellness and health

services and spiritual and education programs."

Details of the acquisition are expected to be finalized in December. Mercy Health Services, parent company of Mercy Services for Aging, is the sponsored work of the Sisters of Mercy — Province of Detroit in health care.

Now that cold weather is here, be sure pets are cared for

Long-range weather forecasts call for a cold and snowy winter.

Pets can be comfortable and happy during the cold months — If their owners observe a few cold weather rules.

An indoor pet needs only a few extra precautions against cold. His outdoor trips should be of a shorter duration, of course. For extended stays outdoors such as a walk, a coat or sweater may be in order — especially for a short-haired breed.

Keep a towel handy to dry him off when he comes inside. Be sure to wipe his feet thoroughly, as rock salt can cause paw irritation.

Outdoor pets are really the ones most affected by the cold. While the Michigan Humane Society

discourages the keeping of animals outdoors, we are aware that many of them are outdoor pets. Here are some common sense tips on care for the outdoor pet.

• Be sure that the pet dog house is in good repair. No leaks or gaps.

• Have the house elevated 4-6 inches off the ground to allow the flooring to dry.

• Have the doorway facing south-east away from prevailing winds.

• Have a flap over the door to keep out drafts.

• Use clean straw as an insulating material and change it frequently.

Now for the dog himself. As with humans, animals expend more calories keeping themselves warm in cold weather. Therefore, increase

the animals food intake by 15-20 percent during cold weather.

Food and water dishes should be checked frequently and replaced if frozen. When the temperature or wind chill factor is 0 degrees or below, consider bringing the pet inside

for the night. Never bring him into a real warm area though, because his heavy coat will make him uncomfortable.

Winter time can be a fun time for pets and people as long as you and your pet are prepared.

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