

## 20,000,000 Shares

# HEALTHCARE REIT

## Common Stock

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Health Care REIT, Inc. is offering for sale 20,000,000 shares of its common stock to be sold in this offering.

Our common stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol “HCN.” On May 8, 2013, the last reported sale price of our common stock on the NYSE was \$74.15 per share.

**Investing in our securities involves risk. You should carefully consider each of the factors described under “Risk Factors” beginning on page S-7 of this prospectus supplement, as well as the accompanying prospectus and the documents we have filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission that are incorporated by reference herein for more information, before you make any investment in our common stock.**

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	<u>Per Share</u>	<u>Total</u>
Public offering price . . . . .	\$73.5000	\$1,470,000,000
Underwriting discount . . . . .	\$ 2.5725	\$ 51,450,000
Proceeds, before expenses, to us . . . . .	\$70.9275	\$1,418,550,000

To the extent the underwriters sell more than 20,000,000 shares of common stock, the underwriters have the option to purchase up to 3,000,000 additional shares of common stock from us on the same terms and conditions as set forth above within 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement. If the underwriters exercise the option in full, the total underwriting discount will be \$59,167,500, and the total proceeds, before expenses, to us will be \$1,631,332,500.

**Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.**

The underwriters are offering the common stock as set forth under “Underwriting.” Delivery of the shares will be made on or about May 14, 2013.

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*Joint Book-Running Managers*

**UBS Investment Bank      Deutsche Bank Securities      Wells Fargo Securities**  
**Barclays                  Citigroup                  J.P. Morgan                  RBC Capital Markets**

*Senior Co-Managers*

**BofA Merrill Lynch      Credit Agricole CIB      KeyBanc Capital Markets      Morgan Stanley**  
**PNC Capital Markets LLC                  Raymond James                  Stifel**

*Co-Managers*

**BB&T Capital Markets      BNY Mellon Capital Markets, LLC      Comerica Securities      Credit Suisse**  
**The Huntington Investment Company      RBS      SMBC Nikko      SunTrust Robinson Humphrey**

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The date of this prospectus supplement is May 8, 2013.

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**You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and any “free writing prospectus” we authorize to be delivered to you. We have not, and the underwriters have not, authorized anyone to provide you with additional information or information different from that contained in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and any such “free writing prospectus.” We are not, and the underwriters are not, making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale of these securities is not permitted. You should not assume that the information appearing in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, any such “free writing prospectus” or the documents incorporated therein by reference is accurate as of any date other than their respective dates. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.**

**This document is in two parts. The first part is the prospectus supplement, which adds to and updates information contained in the accompanying prospectus. The second part, the prospectus, provides more general information, some of which may not apply to this offering. Generally, when we refer to this prospectus, we are referring to both parts of this document combined. To the extent there is a conflict between the information contained in this prospectus supplement, on the one hand, and the information contained in the accompanying prospectus, on the other hand, you should rely on the information in this prospectus supplement.**

**Before purchasing any securities, you should carefully read this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and any “free writing prospectus” we authorize to be delivered to you, together with the additional information described under the heading “Where You Can Find More Information” in this prospectus supplement.**

**Unless we have specifically indicated otherwise, references in this prospectus supplement to “we,” “us,” “our,” the “Company,” or similar terms are to Health Care REIT, Inc. together with its subsidiaries.**

## PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

*This summary highlights selected information about us and this offering. This information is not complete and does not contain all of the information you should consider before investing in our common stock. You should read this entire prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus carefully, including “Risk Factors” and “Forward-Looking Statements” contained in this prospectus supplement and “Risk Factors” and “Cautionary Statement Concerning Forward-Looking Statements” contained in the accompanying prospectus and the financial statements and the other information incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, before making an investment decision.*

### About Our Company

We are a real estate investment trust that has been at the forefront of seniors housing and health care real estate since the Company was founded in 1970. We are an S&P 500 company headquartered in Toledo, Ohio. Our portfolio spans the full spectrum of seniors housing and health care real estate, including seniors housing communities, skilled nursing/post-acute facilities, medical office buildings, inpatient and outpatient medical centers and life science facilities. Our capital programs, when combined with comprehensive planning, development and property management services, make us a single-source solution for acquiring, planning, developing, managing, repositioning and monetizing real estate assets. As of March 31, 2013, our diversified portfolio consisted of 1,133 properties in 46 states, the United Kingdom and Canada.

Our principal executive offices are located at 4500 Dorr Street, Toledo, Ohio 43615, and our telephone number is (419) 247-2800. Our website address is [www.hcreit.com](http://www.hcreit.com). The information on our website is not part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus.

### Our Strategy

Our primary objectives are to protect stockholder capital and enhance stockholder value. We seek to pay consistent cash dividends to stockholders and create opportunities to increase dividend payments to stockholders as a result of annual increases in net operating income and portfolio growth. To meet these objectives, we invest across the full spectrum of seniors housing and health care real estate and diversify our investment portfolio by property type, customer and geographic location.

### The Portfolio

The following table summarizes our portfolio as of March 31, 2013:

<u>Type of Property</u>	<u>Investments</u> (in thousands)	<u>Percentage of</u> <u>Investments</u>	<u>Number of</u> <u>Properties</u>
Seniors housing triple-net .....	\$ 8,156,816	43.3%	568
Seniors housing operating(1) .....	6,541,181	34.6%	217
Medical facilities(2) .....	4,181,255	22.1%	242
Totals .....	<u>\$18,879,252</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>1,027</u>

(1) Excludes 93 properties with an investment amount of \$1,155,773,000 which relates to our share of investments in unconsolidated entities with Chartwell Retirement Residences and Sunrise Senior Living, Inc. Please see Note 7 to our unaudited financial statements included in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2013 for additional information.

(2) *Excludes 13 properties with an investment amount of \$372,029,000 which relates to our share of investments in unconsolidated entities with Forest City Enterprises and a strategic medical partnership. Please see Note 7 to our unaudited financial statements included in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2013 for additional information.*

We invest in seniors housing and health care real estate primarily through acquisitions, developments and joint venture partnerships. We diversify our investment portfolio by property type, customer and geographic location. In determining whether to invest in a property, we focus on the following: (1) the experience of the obligor's/partner's management team; (2) the historical and projected financial and operational performance of the property; (3) the credit of the obligor/partner; (4) the security for any lease or loan; (5) the real estate attributes of the building and its location; (6) the capital committed to the property by the obligor/partner; and (7) the operating fundamentals of the applicable industry. We conduct market research and analysis for all potential investments. In addition, we review the value of all properties, the interest rates and covenant requirements of any facility-level debt to be assumed at the time of the acquisition and the anticipated sources of repayment of any existing debt that is not to be assumed at the time of the acquisition.

We monitor our investments through a variety of methods determined by the type of property. Our proactive and comprehensive asset management process for seniors housing properties generally includes review of monthly financial statements and other operating data for each property, review of obligor/partner creditworthiness, property inspections, and review of covenant compliance relating to licensure, real estate taxes, letters of credit and other collateral. Our internal property management division actively manages and monitors the medical office building portfolio with a comprehensive process including tenant relations, lease expirations, the mix of health service providers, hospital/health system relationships, property performance, capital improvement needs, and market conditions among other things. In monitoring our portfolio, our personnel use a proprietary database to collect and analyze property-specific data. Additionally, we conduct extensive research to ascertain industry trends.

We evaluate the operating environment in each property's market to determine the likely trend in operating performance of the facility. When we identify unacceptable trends, we seek to mitigate, eliminate or transfer the risk. Through these efforts, we are generally able to intervene at an early stage to address any negative trends, and in so doing, support both the collectability of revenue and the value of our investment.

## **Recent Developments**

### ***Update to the Sunrise Acquisition***

On January 9, 2013, we announced the completion of the acquisition of the property portfolio of Sunrise Senior Living, Inc. ("Sunrise"), the sale of the Sunrise management company and the acceleration of all planned joint venture partner buy-outs. We expect to complete approximately \$745 million of remaining Sunrise acquisitions in July 2013.

### ***Revera Investment***

We have entered into a purchase agreement and expect to form a \$1.35 billion partnership structured as a RIDEA investment with Revera, Inc., a Canadian seniors housing provider. We will acquire a 75% interest to own and operate 47 senior housing facilities with approximately 5,000 units. The portfolio, currently 100% owned by Revera, is primarily comprised of independent living communities, with many offering a continuum of care that includes assisted living and/or memory care. Revera will continue to manage the communities under an incentive-based management contract and will own the remaining 25% interest. Under the terms of the agreement, our consideration for our interest in the portfolio will be approximately \$697 million of cash and our pro-rata assumption of debt. The partnership will assume \$419 million in secured debt, of which our share will be \$314 million, at an average rate of 4.0%. The transaction is expected to close in the second quarter of 2013 and

has been approved by each company's board of directors. All currency references in the section of this prospectus supplement entitled "Recent Developments—Revera Investment" are in US dollars and are based upon an exchange rate of CAD to USD of 1:1.

Revera is a high-quality operating partner with scale, geographic concentration, a strong platform and deep experience in the Canadian marketplace. We project that our first-year unlevered net operating income (NOI) yield on the investment, after payment of management fees, will be 7.0%. We expect that the partnership's NOI will grow in excess of 5% over the near-term and will grow 4%-5% over the longer-term.

Revera has invested approximately \$150 million of capital expenditures into the portfolio since 2009. Revera has agreed to invest the first \$50 million of capital expenditures into the portfolio after closing, which we expect to be spent over the next three years, to more firmly position the portfolio for long-term growth. In addition, there is occupancy upside from the current level of 89% because the portfolio includes 14 communities in lease-up.

The portfolio is located primarily in infill locations within Canada's major metropolitan areas, including Toronto, Vancouver, and Calgary. Nearly two-thirds of the portfolio is located in the five largest metropolitan areas in Canada. The transaction will diversify our existing geographic footprint in Canada. Under the terms of the transaction, the Company and Revera will have rights of first opportunity on certain acquisitions and new development opportunities within defined geographic areas in Canada. We believe that the partnership will provide for strong alignment of incentives between Revera and us through shared ownership. Upon completion of the transaction, we will be a strategic capital partner with the two largest providers of private pay seniors housing in Canada, Revera and Chartwell Retirement Residences, and we believe we will be the largest owner of private pay seniors housing communities in the world.

The projections and estimates described above represent the most current information available to our management. Actual results may be different, and could differ materially, from these projections and estimates if our assumptions underlying the projections and estimates, including, without limitation, expectations regarding the portfolio's occupancy rates, rental rates or operating expenses, Revera's ability to obtain rate increases with respect to the portfolio over time, or the capital expenditures required to maintain such rates, differ materially from actual rates, expenses or expenditures, or due to other developments that may arise between now and the time our actual financial results for future periods are finalized. We assume no obligation to update or revise these projections or estimates.

NOI is a supplemental measure of our operating performance; however, this supplemental measure is not defined by U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. See "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations—Non-GAAP Financial Measures" in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012 for a discussion and definition of NOI.

### ***2013 Dispositions***

We anticipate approximately \$245 million of remaining dispositions in 2013.

Our anticipated acquisitions and dispositions are in various stages of closing and some or all of the transactions may not be completed on currently anticipated terms, or within currently anticipated timeframes, or at all. The completion of the anticipated acquisitions and dispositions is subject to the satisfaction of various conditions.

### **Other Information**

The SEC maintains an Internet website at <http://www.sec.gov> that contains our annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, current reports on Form 8-K and proxy statements, and all amendments thereto. All reports that we file with the SEC may be read and copied at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20549. Information about the operation of the Public Reference Room may be obtained by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330.

## The Offering

Issuer .....	Health Care REIT, Inc.
Common Stock Offered .....	20,000,000 shares of our common stock, \$1.00 par value per share. We have also granted the underwriters an option to purchase up to 3,000,000 additional shares of our common stock.
Common Stock to be Outstanding After this Offering .....	281,432,764 shares (284,432,764 shares if the underwriters exercise their option in full).
Use of Proceeds .....	The net proceeds from this offering will be approximately \$1.4 billion (\$1.6 billion if the underwriters exercise their option in full), after deducting the underwriting discount and estimated offering expenses. We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering to repay advances under our unsecured lines of credit, to repay other outstanding indebtedness and for general corporate purposes, including investing in health care and seniors housing properties. Pending such use, the net proceeds may be invested in short-term, investment grade, interest-bearing securities, certificates of deposit or indirect or guaranteed obligations of the United States. See "Use of Proceeds."
Dividends .....	We are currently paying dividends of \$0.765 per quarter, or \$3.06 per year, per share of common stock.
New York Stock Exchange Symbol ....	HCN
Risk Factors .....	You should carefully consider the information set forth in the section of this prospectus supplement entitled "Risk Factors" as well as the other information included in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus before deciding whether to invest in our common stock.

The number of shares of our common stock outstanding after this offering is based on 261,432,764 shares outstanding as of March 31, 2013 and excludes as of March 31, 2013:

- 1,035,436 shares of common stock reserved for issuance that relate to outstanding options under the 1995 Stock Incentive Plan, the Stock Plan for Non-Employee Directors and the 2005 Long-Term Incentive Plan;
- 3,188,941 shares of common stock reserved for issuance under our dividend reinvestment and stock purchase plan, of which 85,857 shares of common stock were issued in April 2013 (also excludes 6,896,916 additional shares of common stock that were subsequently reserved for issuance in May 2013 under our dividend reinvestment and stock purchase plan);
- 9,714,821 shares of common stock reserved for issuance upon conversion of \$494,403,000 aggregate principal amount of our 3.00% Convertible Senior Notes due 2029;
- 349,854 shares of common stock reserved for issuance upon conversion of our outstanding shares of Series H Cumulative Convertible and Redeemable Preferred Stock;

- 12,161,250 shares of common stock reserved for issuance upon conversion of our outstanding shares of Series I Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock;
- shares of common stock that may be issued upon conversion of the convertible senior notes or the Series I Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock as a make-whole premium (or similar consideration) upon the occurrence of a make-whole fundamental change or fundamental change (as applicable); and
- 3,000,000 shares of our common stock that the underwriters have the option to purchase from us.

Unless we specifically state otherwise, the information in this prospectus supplement assumes that the underwriters do not exercise their option to purchase additional shares of our common stock.

### Summary Selected Historical Consolidated Financial Data

The summary selected historical consolidated financial data set forth below should be read in conjunction with the sections of this prospectus supplement entitled “Capitalization” and “Prospectus Supplement Summary,” as well as the other information that we have filed with the SEC and incorporated by reference herein. The summary selected historical consolidated financial data for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2012 have been derived from our audited consolidated financial statements. Our audited consolidated financial statements have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, our independent registered public accounting firm. The summary selected historical consolidated financial data as of and for the three months ended March 31, 2013 and 2012 have been derived from our unaudited interim consolidated financial statements. In the opinion of our management, the unaudited interim consolidated financial statements have been prepared on the same basis as the audited consolidated financial statements and include all adjustments, consisting of normal recurring adjustments, necessary for a fair presentation of the financial position and results of operations as of such dates and for such periods. Results for the interim periods are not necessarily indicative of the results to be expected for the full year. This information is only a summary, and should be read together with, and is qualified in its entirety by reference to, our historical consolidated financial statements and notes thereto and the section entitled “Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations” included in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2013 and our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013, which are incorporated by reference herein.

	Year ended December 31,			Three months ended March 31,	
	2010	2011	2012	2012	2013
Amounts are in thousands, except per share data					
<b>Operating Data</b>					
Revenues .....	\$578,040	\$1,329,525	\$1,821,567	\$417,996	\$633,915
Income (loss) from continuing operations					
attributable to common stockholders .....	21,215	51,289	102,420	25,388	(29,229)
Net income attributable to common stockholders ...	106,882	157,108	221,884	39,307	55,058
<b>Per Share Data</b>					
Basic:					
Income (loss) from continuing operations					
attributable to common stockholders .....	\$ 0.16	\$ 0.35	\$ 0.48	\$ 0.14	\$ (0.11)
Net income attributable to common stockholders ...	\$ 0.84	\$ 0.90	\$ 0.99	\$ 0.20	\$ 0.21
Diluted:					
Income (loss) from continuing operations					
attributable to common stockholders .....	\$ 0.16	\$ 0.35	\$ 0.47	\$ 0.14	\$ (0.11)
Net income attributable to common stockholders ...	\$ 0.83	\$ 0.90	\$ 0.98	\$ 0.19	\$ 0.21
Dividends declared and paid per common share ....	\$ 2.74	\$ 2.835	\$ 2.960	\$ 0.740	\$ 0.765

	December 31,			March 31,	
	2010	2011	2012	2012	2013
Amounts are in thousands					
<b>Balance Sheet Data</b>					
Net real estate investments .....	\$8,590,833	\$13,942,350	\$17,423,009	\$14,561,057	\$18,879,252
Total assets .....	9,451,734	14,924,606	19,549,109	15,859,734	20,788,972
Total long-term obligations .....	4,469,736	7,240,752	8,531,899	6,877,979	9,853,928
Total liabilities .....	4,714,081	7,612,309	8,993,998	7,271,181	10,372,098
Total preferred stock .....	291,667	1,010,417	1,022,917	1,297,917	1,022,917
Total equity .....	4,733,100	7,278,647	10,520,519	8,554,018	10,383,147

## **RISK FACTORS**

*An investment in our common stock involves risks. You should carefully consider the following risk factors, together with all of the other information included in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including the section entitled "Risk Factors" included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013, before making an investment in our common stock. If any of the following risks actually occurs, our business, results of operations and financial condition will likely suffer. As a result, the trading price of our common stock may decline, and you may lose part or all of your investment.*

### **Risks Related to Our Business**

#### **Our expected results may not be achieved**

Our expected results may not be achieved, and actual results may differ materially from our expectations. This may be a result of various factors, including, but not limited to: the status of the economy; the status of capital markets, including availability and cost of capital; issues facing the health care industry, including compliance with, and changes to, regulations and payment policies, responding to government investigations and punitive settlements and operators'/tenants' difficulty in cost-effectively obtaining and maintaining adequate liability and other insurance; changes in financing terms; competition within the health care, seniors housing and life science industries; negative developments in the operating results or financial condition of operators/tenants, including, but not limited to, their ability to pay rent and repay loans; our ability to transition or sell facilities with profitable results; the failure to make new investments as and when anticipated; acts of God affecting our properties; our ability to re-lease space at similar rates as vacancies occur; our ability to timely reinvest sale proceeds at similar rates to assets sold; operator/tenant or joint venture partner bankruptcies or insolvencies; the cooperation of joint venture partners; government regulations affecting Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement rates and operational requirements; regulatory approval and market acceptance of the products and technologies of life science tenants; liability or contract claims by or against operators/tenants; unanticipated difficulties and/or expenditures relating to future acquisitions; environmental laws affecting our properties; changes in rules or practices governing our financial reporting; the movement of U.S. and foreign currency exchange rates; qualification as a REIT; and key management personnel recruitment and retention.

#### **Risk factors related to our operators' revenues and expenses**

Our operators' revenues are primarily driven by occupancy, private pay rates, and Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement, if applicable. Expenses for these facilities are primarily driven by the costs of labor, food, utilities, taxes, insurance and rent or debt service. Revenues from government reimbursement have, and may continue to, come under pressure due to reimbursement cuts and state budget shortfalls. Operating costs continue to increase for our operators. To the extent that any decrease in revenues and/or any increase in operating expenses result in a property not generating enough cash to make payments to us, the credit of our operator and the value of other collateral would have to be relied upon. To the extent the value of such property is reduced, we may need to record an impairment for such asset. Furthermore, if we determine to dispose of an underperforming property, such sale may result in a loss. Any such impairment or loss on sale would negatively affect our financial results.

The continued weakened economy may have an adverse effect on our operators and tenants, including their ability to access credit or maintain occupancy and/or private pay rates. If the operations, cash flows or financial condition of our operators are materially adversely impacted by economic conditions, our revenue and operations may be adversely affected.

### **Increased competition may affect our operators' ability to meet their obligations to us**

The operators of our properties compete on a local and regional basis with operators of properties and other health care providers that provide comparable services. We cannot be certain that the operators of all of our facilities will be able to achieve and maintain occupancy and rate levels that will enable them to meet all of their obligations to us. Our operators are expected to encounter increased competition in the future that could limit their ability to attract residents or expand their businesses.

### **Risk factors related to obligor bankruptcies**

We are exposed to the risk that our obligors may not be able to meet the rent, principal and interest or other payments due us, which may result in an obligor bankruptcy or insolvency, or that an obligor might become subject to bankruptcy or insolvency proceedings for other reasons. Although our operating lease agreements provide us with the right to evict a tenant, demand immediate payment of rent and exercise other remedies, and our loans provide us with the right to terminate any funding obligation, demand immediate repayment of principal and unpaid interest, foreclose on the collateral and exercise other remedies, the bankruptcy and insolvency laws afford certain rights to a party that has filed for bankruptcy or reorganization. An obligor in bankruptcy or subject to insolvency proceedings may be able to limit or delay our ability to collect unpaid rent in the case of a lease or to receive unpaid principal and interest in the case of a loan, and to exercise other rights and remedies.

We may be required to fund certain expenses (e.g., real estate taxes and maintenance) to preserve the value of an investment property, avoid the imposition of liens on a property and/or transition a property to a new tenant. In some instances, we have terminated our lease with a tenant and relet the property to another tenant. In some of those situations, we have provided working capital loans to and limited indemnification of the new obligor. If we cannot transition a leased property to a new tenant, we may take possession of that property, which may expose us to certain successor liabilities. Should such events occur, our revenue and operating cash flow may be adversely affected.

### **Transfers of health care facilities may require regulatory approvals and these facilities may not have efficient alternative uses**

Transfers of health care facilities to successor operators frequently are subject to regulatory approvals or notifications, including, but not limited to, change of ownership approvals under certificate of need ("CON") or determination of need laws, state licensure laws and Medicare and Medicaid provider arrangements, that are not required for transfers of other types of real estate. The replacement of a health care facility operator could be delayed by the approval process of any federal, state or local agency necessary for the transfer of the facility or the replacement of the operator licensed to manage the facility. Alternatively, given the specialized nature of our facilities, we may be required to spend substantial time and funds to adapt these properties to other uses. If we are unable to timely transfer properties to successor operators or find efficient alternative uses, our revenue and operations may be adversely affected.

### **Risk factors related to government regulations**

Some of our obligors' businesses are affected by government reimbursement. To the extent that an operator/tenant receives a significant portion of its revenues from government payors, primarily Medicare and Medicaid, such revenues may be subject to statutory and regulatory changes, retroactive rate adjustments, recovery of program overpayments or set-offs, court decisions, administrative rulings, policy interpretations, payment or other delays by fiscal intermediaries or carriers, government funding restrictions (at a program level or with respect to specific facilities) and interruption or delays in payments due to any ongoing government investigations and audits at such property. In recent years, government payors have frozen or reduced payments to health care providers due to budgetary pressures. Health care reimbursement will likely continue to be of paramount importance to federal and state authorities. We cannot make any assessment as to the ultimate timing

or effect any future legislative reforms may have on the financial condition of our obligors and properties. There can be no assurance that adequate reimbursement levels will be available for services provided by any property operator, whether the property receives reimbursement from Medicare, Medicaid or private payors. Significant limits on the scope of services reimbursed and on reimbursement rates and fees could have a material adverse effect on an obligor's liquidity, financial condition and results of operations, which could adversely affect the ability of an obligor to meet its obligations to us. See "Item 1—Business—Certain Government Regulations—Reimbursement" included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013, and "Item 2—Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations—Health Care Reimbursements" included in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2013.

Our operators and tenants generally are subject to varying levels of federal, state, local and industry-regulated licensure, certification and inspection laws, regulations and standards. Our operators' or tenants' failure to comply with any of these laws, regulations or standards could result in loss of accreditation, denial of reimbursement, imposition of fines, suspension, decertification or exclusion from federal and state health care programs, loss of license or closure of the facility. Such actions may have an effect on our operators' or tenants' ability to make lease payments to us and, therefore, adversely impact us. See "Item 1—Business—Certain Government Regulations—Other Related Laws" included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013, and "Item 2—Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations—Health Care Reimbursements" and "—Other Related Laws" included in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2013.

Many of our properties may require a license, registration and/or CON to operate. Failure to obtain a license, registration or CON, or loss of a required license, registration or CON would prevent a facility from operating in the manner intended by the operators or tenants. These events could materially adversely affect our operators' or tenants' ability to make rent payments to us. State and local laws also may regulate the expansion, including the addition of new beds or services or acquisition of medical equipment, and the construction or renovation of health care facilities, by requiring a CON or other similar approval from a state agency. See "Item 1—Business—Certain Government Regulations—Licensing and Certification" included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, as modified by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (collectively, the "Health Reform Laws"), provides states that expand their Medicaid coverage to otherwise eligible state residents with incomes below 138% of the federal poverty line with an increased federal medical assistance percentage when certain conditions are met. On June 28, 2012, the United States Supreme Court upheld the individual mandate of the Health Reform Laws but partially invalidated the expansion of Medicaid. The ruling on Medicaid expansion allows states to elect not to participate in the expansion—and to forego funding for the Medicaid expansion—without losing their existing Medicaid funding. Given that the federal government substantially funds the Medicaid expansion, it is unclear how many states will pursue this option, although a number of states have made statements or otherwise indicated that they do not intend to expand Medicaid coverage at this time. The participation by states in the Medicaid expansion could have the dual effect of increasing our tenants' revenues, through new patients, but further straining state budgets. While the federal government will pay for approximately 100% of those additional costs from 2014 to 2016, states will be expected to pay for part of those additional costs beginning in 2017. In light of this, at least one state that has passed legislation to allow the state to expand its Medicaid coverage has included sunset provisions in the legislation that require that the expanded benefits be reduced or eliminated if the federal government's funding for the program is decreased or eliminated, permitting the state to re-visit the issue once it begins to share financial responsibility for the expansion. With increasingly strained budgets, it is unclear how states that do not include such sunset provisions will pay their share of these additional Medicaid costs and what other health care expenditures could be reduced as a result. A significant reduction in other health care related

spending by states to pay for increased Medicaid costs could affect our tenants' revenue streams. See "Item 1—Business—Certain Government Regulations—Reimbursement" included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013, and "Item 2—Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations—Health Care Reimbursements" and "—Other Related Laws" included in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2013.

More generally, and because of the dynamic nature of the legislative and regulatory environment for health care products and services, and in light of existing federal deficit and budgetary concerns, we cannot predict the impact that broad-based, far-reaching legislative or regulatory changes could have on the U.S. economy, our business or that of our tenants.

### **Risk factors related to liability claims and insurance costs**

In recent years, skilled nursing and seniors housing operators have experienced substantial increases in both the number and size of patient care liability claims. As a result, general and professional liability costs have increased in some markets. General and professional liability insurance coverage may be restricted or very costly, which may adversely affect the property operators' future operations, cash flows and financial condition, and may have a material adverse effect on the property operators' ability to meet their obligations to us.

### **Unfavorable resolution of pending and future litigation matters and disputes could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition**

From time to time, we may be directly involved in a number of legal proceedings, lawsuits and other claims. We may also be named as defendants in lawsuits allegedly arising out of our actions or the actions of our operators/tenants or managers in which such operators/tenants or managers have agreed to indemnify, defend and hold us harmless from and against various claims, litigation and liabilities arising in connection with their respective businesses. An unfavorable resolution of pending or future litigation may have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations and financial condition. Regardless of its outcome, litigation may result in substantial costs and expenses and significantly divert the attention of management. There can be no assurance that we will be able to prevail in, or achieve a favorable settlement of, pending or future litigation. In addition, pending litigation or future litigation, government proceedings or environmental matters could lead to increased costs or interruption of our normal business operations.

### **Risk factors related to acquisitions**

We are exposed to the risk that some of our acquisitions may not prove to be successful. We could encounter unanticipated difficulties and expenditures relating to any acquired properties, including contingent liabilities, and acquired properties might require significant management attention that would otherwise be devoted to our ongoing business. If we agree to provide construction funding to an operator/tenant and the project is not completed, we may need to take steps to ensure completion of the project. Such expenditures may negatively affect our results of operations. Furthermore, there can be no assurance that our anticipated acquisitions and investments, the completion of which is subject to various conditions, will be consummated in accordance with anticipated timing, on anticipated terms, or at all.

### **Risk factors related to joint ventures**

We have entered into, and may continue in the future to enter into, partnerships or joint ventures with other persons or entities. Joint venture investments involve risks that may not be present with other methods of ownership, including the possibility that our partner might become insolvent, refuse to make capital contributions when due or otherwise fail to meet its obligations, which may result in certain liabilities to us for guarantees and other commitments; that our partner might at any time have economic or other business interests or goals that are

or become inconsistent with our interests or goals; that we could become engaged in a dispute with our partner, which could require us to expend additional resources to resolve such disputes and could have an adverse impact on the operations and profitability of the joint venture; and that our partner may be in a position to take action or withhold consent contrary to our instructions or requests. In addition, our ability to transfer our interest in a joint venture to a third party may be restricted. In some instances, we and/or our partner may have the right to trigger a buy-sell arrangement, which could cause us to sell our interest, or acquire our partner's interest, at a time when we otherwise would not have initiated such a transaction. Our ability to acquire our partner's interest may be limited if we do not have sufficient cash, available borrowing capacity or other capital resources. In such event, we may be forced to sell our interest in the joint venture when we would otherwise prefer to retain it. Joint ventures may require us to share decision-making authority with our partners, which could limit our ability to control the properties in the joint ventures. Even when we have a controlling interest, certain major decisions may require partner approval, such as the sale, acquisition or financing of a property.

### **Risk factors related to our seniors housing operating properties**

We are exposed to various operational risks with respect to our seniors housing operating properties that may increase our costs or adversely affect our ability to generate revenues. These risks include fluctuations in occupancy, Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement, if applicable, and private pay rates; economic conditions; competition; federal, state, local, and industry-regulated licensure, certification and inspection laws, regulations, and standards; the availability and increases in cost of general and professional liability insurance coverage; state regulation and rights of residents related to entrance fees; the availability and increases in the cost of labor (as a result of unionization or otherwise). Any one or a combination of these factors may adversely affect our revenue and operations.

### **Risk factors related to life science facilities**

Our tenants in the life science industry face high levels of regulation, expense and uncertainty that may adversely affect their ability to make payments to us. Research, development and clinical testing of products and technologies can be very expensive and sources of funds may not be available to our life science tenants in the future. The products and technologies that are developed and manufactured by our life science tenants may require regulatory approval prior to being made, marketed, sold and used. The regulatory process can be costly, long and unpredictable. Even after a tenant gains regulatory approval and market acceptance, the product still presents regulatory and liability risks, such as safety concerns, competition from new products and eventually the expiration of patent protection. These factors may affect the ability of our life science tenants to make timely payments to us, which may adversely affect our revenue and operations.

### **Risk factors related to indebtedness**

Permanent financing for our investments is typically provided through a combination of public offerings of debt and equity securities and the incurrence or assumption of secured debt. The incurrence or assumption of indebtedness may cause us to become more leveraged, which could (1) require us to dedicate a greater portion of our cash flow to the payment of debt service, (2) make us more vulnerable to a downturn in the economy, (3) limit our ability to obtain additional financing or (4) negatively affect our credit ratings or outlook by one or more of the rating agencies.

Our debt agreements contain various covenants, restrictions and events of default. Among other things, these provisions require us to maintain certain financial ratios and minimum net worth and impose certain limits on our ability to incur indebtedness, create liens and make investments or acquisitions. Breaches of these covenants could result in defaults under the instruments governing the applicable indebtedness, in addition to any other indebtedness cross-defaulted against such instruments. These defaults could have a material adverse impact on our business, results of operations and financial condition.

In addition, adverse economic conditions may impact the availability of additional funds or could cause the terms on which we are able to borrow additional funds to become unfavorable. In those circumstances, we may be required to raise additional equity in the capital markets. Our access to capital depends upon a number of factors over which we have little or no control, including rising interest rates, inflation and other general market conditions and the market's perception of our growth potential and our current and potential future earnings and cash distributions and the market price of the shares of our capital stock. We cannot assure you that we will be able to raise the capital necessary to make future investments or to meet our obligations and commitments as they mature.

#### **Risk factors related to our credit ratings**

We plan to manage the Company to maintain a capital structure consistent with our current profile, but there can be no assurance that we will be able to maintain our current credit ratings. Any downgrades in terms of ratings or outlook by any or all of the rating agencies could have a material adverse impact on our cost and availability of capital, which could in turn have a material adverse impact on our consolidated results of operations, liquidity and/or financial condition.

#### **Risk factors related to swaps**

We enter into interest rate swap agreements from time to time to manage some of our exposure to interest rate and foreign currency exchange rate volatility. These swap agreements involve risks, such as the risk that counterparties may fail to honor their obligations under these arrangements. In addition, these arrangements may not be effective in reducing our exposure to changes in interest rates or foreign currency exchange rates. When we use forward-starting interest rate swaps, there is a risk that we will not complete the long-term borrowing against which the swap is intended to hedge. If such events occur, our results of operations may be adversely affected.

#### **Risk factors related to environmental laws**

Under various federal and state laws, owners or operators of real estate may be required to respond to the presence or release of hazardous substances on the property and may be held liable for property damage, personal injuries or penalties that result from environmental contamination or exposure to hazardous substances. We may become liable to reimburse the government for damages and costs it incurs in connection with the contamination. Generally, such liability attaches to a person based on the person's relationship to the property. Our tenants or borrowers are primarily responsible for the condition of the property. Moreover, we review environmental site assessments of the properties that we own or encumber prior to taking an interest in them. Those assessments are designed to meet the "all appropriate inquiry" standard, which we believe qualifies us for the innocent purchaser defense if environmental liabilities arise. Based upon such assessments, we do not believe that any of our properties are subject to material environmental contamination. However, environmental liabilities may be present in our properties and we may incur costs to remediate contamination, which could have a material adverse effect on our business or financial condition or the business or financial condition of our obligors.

#### **Risk factors related to facilities that require entrance fees**

Certain of our seniors housing facilities require the payment of an upfront entrance fee by the resident, a portion of which may be refundable by the operator. Some of these facilities are subject to substantial oversight by state regulators relating to these funds. As a result of this oversight, residents of these facilities may have a variety of rights, including, for example, the right to cancel their contracts within a specified period of time and certain lien rights. The oversight and rights of residents within these facilities may have an effect on the revenue or operations of the operators of such facilities and therefore may negatively impact us.

### **Risk factors related to facilities under construction or development**

At any given time, we may be in the process of constructing one or more new facilities that ultimately will require a CON and license before they can be utilized by the operator for their intended use. The operator also may need to obtain Medicare and Medicaid certification and enter into Medicare and Medicaid provider agreements and/or third party payor contracts. In the event that the operator is unable to obtain the necessary CON, licensure, certification, provider agreements or contracts after the completion of construction, there is a risk that we will not be able to earn any revenues on the facility until either the initial operator obtains a license or certification to operate the new facility and the necessary provider agreements or contracts or we find and contract with a new operator that is able to obtain a license to operate the facility for its intended use and the necessary provider agreements or contracts.

In connection with our renovation, redevelopment, development and related construction activities, we may be unable to obtain, or suffer delays in obtaining, necessary zoning, land-use, building, occupancy and other required governmental permits and authorizations. These factors could result in increased costs or our abandonment of these projects. In addition, we may not be able to obtain financing on favorable terms, which may render us unable to proceed with our development activities, and we may not be able to complete construction and lease-up of a property on schedule, which could result in increased debt service expense or construction costs.

Additionally, the time frame required for development, construction and lease-up of these properties means that we may have to wait years for significant cash returns. Because we are required to make cash distributions to our stockholders, if the cash flow from operations or refinancing is not sufficient, we may be forced to borrow additional money to fund such distributions. Newly developed and acquired properties may not produce the cash flow that we expect, which could adversely affect our overall financial performance.

In deciding whether to acquire or develop a particular property, we make assumptions regarding the expected future performance of that property. In particular, we estimate the return on our investment based on expected occupancy, rental rates and capital costs. If our financial projections with respect to a new property are inaccurate as a result of increases in capital costs or other factors, the property may fail to perform as we expected in analyzing our investment. Our estimate of the costs of repositioning or redeveloping an acquired property may prove to be inaccurate, which may result in our failure to meet our profitability goals. Additionally, we may acquire new properties that are not fully leased, and the cash flow from existing operations may be insufficient to pay the operating expenses and debt service associated with that property.

### **We do not know if our tenants will renew their existing leases, and if they do not, we may be unable to lease the properties on as favorable terms, or at all**

We cannot predict whether our tenants will renew existing leases at the end of their lease terms, which expire at various times. If these leases are not renewed, we would be required to find other tenants to occupy those properties or sell them. There can be no assurance that we would be able to identify suitable replacement tenants or enter into leases with new tenants on terms as favorable to us as the current leases or that we would be able to lease those properties at all.

### **Our ownership of properties through ground leases exposes us to the loss of such properties upon breach or termination of the ground leases**

We have acquired an interest in certain of our properties by acquiring a leasehold interest in the property on which the building is located, and we may acquire additional properties in the future through the purchase of interests in ground leases. As the lessee under a ground lease, we are exposed to the possibility of losing the property upon termination of the ground lease or an earlier breach of the ground lease by us.

**Illiquidity of real estate investments could significantly impede our ability to respond to adverse changes in the performance of our properties**

Real estate investments are relatively illiquid. Our ability to quickly sell or exchange any of our properties in response to changes in economic and other conditions will be limited. No assurances can be given that we will recognize full value for any property that we are required to sell for liquidity reasons. Our inability to respond rapidly to changes in the performance of our investments could adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations. In addition, we are exposed to the risks inherent in concentrating investments in real estate, and in particular, the seniors housing and health care industries. A downturn in the real estate industry could adversely affect the value of our properties and our ability to sell properties for a price or on terms acceptable to us.

**Risk factors related to reinvestment of sale proceeds**

From time to time, we will have cash available from (1) the proceeds of sales of our securities, (2) principal payments on our loans receivable and (3) the sale of properties, including non-elective dispositions, under the terms of master leases or similar financial support arrangements. In order to maintain current revenues and continue generating attractive returns, we expect to re-invest these proceeds in a timely manner. We compete for real estate investments with a broad variety of potential investors. This competition for attractive investments may negatively affect our ability to make timely investments on terms acceptable to us.

**Failure to properly manage our rapid growth could distract our management or increase our expenses**

We have experienced rapid growth and development in a relatively short period of time and expect to continue this rapid growth in the future. This growth has resulted in increased levels of responsibility for our management. Future property acquisitions could place significant additional demands on, and require us to expand, our management, resources and personnel. Our failure to manage any such rapid growth effectively could harm our business and, in particular, our financial condition, results of operations and cash flows, which could negatively affect our ability to make distributions to stockholders. Our growth could also increase our capital requirements, which may require us to issue potentially dilutive equity securities and incur additional debt.

**Ownership of property outside the United States may subject us to different or greater risks than those associated with our domestic operations**

We have operations in Canada and the United Kingdom. International development, ownership, and operating activities involve risks that are different from those we face with respect to our domestic properties and operations. These risks include, but are not limited to, any international currency gain recognized with respect to changes in exchange rates may not qualify under the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test that we must satisfy annually in order to qualify and maintain our status as a REIT; challenges with respect to the repatriation of foreign earnings and cash; changes in foreign political, regulatory, and economic conditions, including regionally, nationally, and locally; challenges in managing international operations; challenges of complying with a wide variety of foreign laws and regulations, including those relating to real estate, corporate governance, operations, taxes, employment and legal proceedings; foreign ownership restrictions with respect to operations in countries; differences in lending practices and the willingness of domestic or foreign lenders to provide financing; regional or country-specific business cycles and economic instability; and changes in applicable laws and regulations in the United States that affect foreign operations. If we are unable to successfully manage the risks associated with international expansion and operations, our results of operations and financial condition may be adversely affected.

**Risk factors related to changes in currency exchange rates**

As we expand our operations internationally, currency exchange rate fluctuations could affect our results of operations and financial position. We expect to generate an increasing portion of our revenue and expenses in

such foreign currencies as the Canadian dollar and the British pound. Although we may enter into foreign exchange agreements with financial institutions and/or obtain local currency mortgage debt in order to reduce our exposure to fluctuations in the value of foreign currencies, we cannot assure you that foreign currency fluctuations will not have a material adverse effect on us.

### **We might fail to qualify or remain qualified as a REIT**

We intend to operate as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”), and believe we have and will continue to operate in such a manner. If we lose our status as a REIT, we will face serious income tax consequences that will substantially reduce the funds available for satisfying our obligations and for distribution to our stockholders because:

- we would not be allowed a deduction for distributions to stockholders in computing our taxable income and would be subject to U.S. federal income tax at regular corporate rates;
- we could be subject to the federal alternative minimum tax and possibly increased state and local taxes; and
- unless we are entitled to relief under statutory provisions, we could not elect to be subject to tax as a REIT for four taxable years following the year during which we were disqualified.

Since REIT qualification requires us to meet a number of complex requirements, it is possible that we may fail to fulfill them, and if we do, our earnings will be reduced by the amount of U.S. federal and other income taxes owed. A reduction in our earnings would affect the amount we could distribute to our stockholders. If we do not qualify as a REIT, we would not be required to make distributions to stockholders since a non-REIT is not required to pay dividends to stockholders in order to maintain REIT status or avoid an excise tax. See “Item 1—Business—Taxation—Federal Income Tax Considerations” of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013, for a discussion of the provisions of the Code that apply to us and the effects of failure to qualify as a REIT.

In addition, if we fail to qualify as a REIT, all distributions to stockholders would continue to be treated as dividends to the extent of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, although corporate stockholders may be eligible for the dividends received deduction, and individual stockholders may be eligible for taxation at the rates generally applicable to long-term capital gains (currently at a maximum rate of 20%) with respect to distributions.

As a result of all these factors, our failure to qualify as a REIT also could impair our ability to implement our business strategy and would adversely affect the value of our common stock.

Qualification as a REIT involves the application of highly technical and complex Code provisions for which there are only limited judicial and administrative interpretations. The determination of various factual matters and circumstances not entirely within our control may affect our ability to remain qualified as a REIT. Although we believe that we qualify as a REIT, we cannot assure you that we will continue to qualify or remain qualified as a REIT for U.S. federal income tax purposes. See “Item 1—Business—Taxation—Federal Income Tax Considerations” of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013.

### **The 90% annual distribution requirement will decrease our liquidity and may limit our ability to engage in otherwise beneficial transactions**

To comply with the 90% distribution requirement applicable to REITs and to avoid the nondeductible excise tax, we must make distributions to our stockholders. See “Item 1—Business—Taxation—Federal Income Tax Considerations—Qualification as a REIT—Annual Distribution Requirements” included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7,

2013. Although we anticipate that we generally will have sufficient cash or liquid assets to enable us to satisfy the REIT distribution requirement, it is possible that, from time to time, we may not have sufficient cash or other liquid assets to meet the 90% distribution requirement, or we may decide to retain cash or distribute such greater amount as may be necessary to avoid income and excise taxation. This may be due to timing differences between the actual receipt of income and actual payment of deductible expenses, on the one hand, and the inclusion of that income and deduction of those expenses in arriving at our taxable income, on the other hand. In addition, non-deductible expenses such as principal amortization or repayments or capital expenditures in excess of non-cash deductions may cause us to fail to have sufficient cash or liquid assets to enable us to satisfy the 90% distribution requirement. In the event that timing differences occur, or we deem it appropriate to retain cash, we may borrow funds, issue additional equity securities (although we cannot assure you that we will be able to do so), pay taxable stock dividends, if possible, distribute other property or securities or engage in another transaction intended to enable us to meet the REIT distribution requirements. This may require us to raise additional capital to meet our obligations.

### **The lease of qualified health care properties to a taxable REIT subsidiary is subject to special requirements**

We lease certain qualified health care properties to taxable REIT subsidiaries (or limited liability companies of which the taxable REIT subsidiaries are members), which lessees contract with managers (or related parties) to manage the health care operations at these properties. The rents from this taxable REIT subsidiary lessee structure are treated as qualifying rents from real property if (1) they are paid pursuant to an arms-length lease of a qualified health care property with a taxable REIT subsidiary and (2) the manager qualifies as an eligible independent contractor (as defined in the Code). If any of these conditions are not satisfied, then the rents will not be qualifying rents. See “Item 1—Business—Taxation—Federal Income Tax Considerations—Qualification as a REIT—Income Tests” included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013.

### **If certain sale-leaseback transactions are not characterized by the Internal Revenue Service as “true leases,” we may be subject to adverse tax consequences**

We have purchased certain properties and leased them back to the sellers of such properties, and we may enter into similar transactions in the future. We intend for any such sale-leaseback transaction to be structured in such a manner that the lease will be characterized as a “true lease,” thereby allowing us to be treated as the owner of the property for U.S. federal income tax purposes. However, depending on the terms of any specific transaction, the Internal Revenue Service (“IRS”) might take the position that the transaction is not a “true lease” but is more properly treated in some other manner. In the event any sale-leaseback transaction is challenged and successfully re-characterized by the IRS, we would not be entitled to claim the deductions for depreciation and cost recovery generally available to an owner of property. Furthermore, if a sale-leaseback transaction were so re-characterized, we might fail to satisfy the REIT asset tests or income tests and, consequently, could lose our REIT status effective with the year of re-characterization. See “Item 1—Business—Taxation—Federal Income Tax Considerations—Qualification as a REIT—Asset Tests” and “—Income Tests” included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013. Alternatively, the amount of our REIT taxable income could be recalculated, which may cause us to fail to meet the REIT annual distribution requirements for a taxable year. See “Item 1—Business—Taxation—Federal Income Tax Considerations—Qualification as a REIT—Annual Distribution Requirements” included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013.

### **Other risk factors**

We are also subject to other risks. First, our certificate of incorporation and by-laws contain anti-takeover provisions (restrictions on share ownership and transfer and super majority stockholder approval requirements for business combinations) that could make it more difficult for or even prevent a third party from acquiring us

without the approval of our incumbent board of directors. Provisions and agreements that inhibit or discourage takeover attempts could reduce the market value of our common stock.

Additionally, we are dependent on key personnel. Although we have entered into employment agreements with our executive officers, losing any one of them could, at least temporarily, have an adverse impact on our operations. We believe that losing more than one could have a material adverse impact on our business.

### **Risks Related to Our Common Stock**

#### **The share price of our common stock could be affected by several factors**

The share price of our common stock depends upon several factors, including, but not limited to: our financial condition, performance and prospects; general economic and financial market conditions; changes in estimates by analysts; the market for similar securities issued by real estate investment trusts; and our ability to meet analysts' estimates. In addition, the market price of our common stock may be affected by future sales of our securities, including additional issuances of common stock and securities convertible into common stock. These factors, among others, could significantly depress the trading price of our common stock.

#### **Holders of our outstanding shares of preferred stock have, and holders of any future outstanding shares of preferred stock will have, liquidation, dividend and other rights that are senior to the rights of the holders of our common stock**

Since our board of directors has the authority to designate and issue preferred stock with liquidation, dividend and other rights that are senior to those of our common stock, the holders of our issued and outstanding shares of preferred stock, as well as any that may be issued in the future, would receive, upon our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, before any payment is made to holders of our common stock, their liquidation preferences as well as any accrued and unpaid distributions. These payments would reduce the remaining amount of our assets, if any, available for distribution to holders of our common stock.

#### **Our issuance of additional securities may reduce the market price for our shares**

The market price of our common stock may be affected by future sales of our securities, including those made pursuant to the separate equity distribution agreements with each of UBS Securities LLC, RBS Securities Inc., KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc. and Credit Agricole Securities (USA) Inc. and other additional issuances of common stock and securities convertible into common stock. We also are required to issue common stock to the holders of the 3.00% Convertible Senior Notes due 2029, the Series H Cumulative Convertible and Redeemable Preferred Stock, the Series I Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock and the Series J Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock if and when the holders exercise their conversion rights or, in limited circumstances, as a make-whole premium upon the occurrence of a make-whole fundamental change or fundamental change. We may also issue common stock as consideration or partial consideration in connection with our investments and acquisitions or for achieving certain benchmarks related to such investments and acquisitions. The number of shares of common stock that we may issue or that we may issue upon conversion could be significant and dilutive to our existing stockholders.

#### **Our ability to pay dividends in the future is subject to many factors**

Our primary revolving credit facility and our Canadian-denominated unsecured term loan restrict our ability to pay cash dividends on our common stock if we default under the credit facility or term loan, and other financing agreements that we enter into in the future also may limit our ability to pay cash dividends on our capital stock. If we default under our primary revolving credit facility or our Canadian-denominated unsecured term loan, or if future financing agreements restrict our ability to pay cash dividends, we will be restricted in our ability to pay cash dividends on our common stock unless we can refinance amounts outstanding under those agreements.

Under Delaware law, cash dividends on capital stock may only be paid from “surplus” or, if there is no “surplus,” from the corporation’s net profits for the then-current or the preceding fiscal year. Unless we operate profitably, our ability to pay cash dividends on our common stock would require the availability of adequate “surplus,” which is defined as the excess, if any, of our net assets (total assets less total liabilities) over our capital. Further, even if adequate surplus is available to pay cash dividends on our common stock, we may not have sufficient cash to pay dividends on our common stock.

Our ability to pay dividends may be impaired if any of the risks described in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or incorporated by reference herein and in the accompanying prospectus, were to occur. In addition, payment of our dividends depends upon our earnings, our financial condition, maintenance of our REIT status and other factors as our board of directors may deem relevant from time to time.

**We believe that our common stock does not constitute a “U.S. real property interest” and therefore we would not generally be required to withhold from payments to non-U.S. holders under the Foreign Investment in Real Property Act, or FIRPTA. We cannot assure you, however, that our common stock will not constitute a U.S. real property interest**

Although we are not currently aware of any facts that would cause our conclusion to change, depending on the facts in existence at the time of any sale, repurchase, conversion, or retirement of our common stock, it is possible that our common stock could constitute a U.S. real property interest. If so, non-U.S. holders of our common stock would be subject to withholding on payments in connection with such a sale, repurchase, conversion, or retirement regardless of whether such non-U.S. holders provide certification documenting their non-U.S. status. See “Item 1 —Business—Taxation” of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013.

**Certain provisions in our certificate of incorporation and by-laws may restrict your ownership of shares of our capital stock and/or discourage or prevent a change in control**

In order to assist us in maintaining our qualification as a REIT for U.S. federal income tax purposes, our by-laws provide that no person may own, or be deemed to own by virtue of the attribution rules of the Internal Revenue Code, more than 9.8% of the value of our outstanding capital stock, subject to certain exceptions. For this purpose, all options, warrants, convertible securities or other rights to acquire our common stock will be treated as if all such rights had been exercised. If any shares or other securities in excess of this limit are issued or transferred to any person, such issuance or transfer shall be valid only with respect to such amount of shares or securities as does not exceed this limit, and such issuance or transfer will be void with respect to the excess. These and other provisions in our certificate of incorporation, by-laws and Delaware law could delay, prevent or deter a transaction or change in control, including an acquisition of us by a third party, that might involve a premium price for our common stock or otherwise be favorable to you as a stockholder.

## FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference contain “forward-looking statements” as that term is defined in the federal securities laws. These forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, those regarding:

- the possible expansion of our portfolio, including our ability to close our anticipated acquisitions and investments on currently anticipated terms, or within currently anticipated timeframes, or at all, and realize currently anticipated benefits from such acquisitions and investments;
- the sale of properties, including our ability to close our anticipated dispositions on currently anticipated terms, or within currently anticipated timeframes, or at all, and realize currently anticipated benefits from such dispositions;
- the performance of our operators/tenants and properties;
- the projections and estimates related to the anticipated returns on our anticipated Revera investment;
- our ability to enter into agreements with new viable tenants for vacant space or for properties that we take back from financially troubled tenants, if any;
- our occupancy rates;
- our ability to acquire, develop and/or manage properties;
- our ability to make distributions to stockholders;
- our policies and plans regarding investments, financings and other matters;
- our ability to successfully manage the risks associated with international expansion and operations;
- our tax status as a real estate investment trust;
- our critical accounting policies;
- our ability to appropriately balance the use of debt and equity;
- our ability to access capital markets or other sources of funds; and
- our ability to meet our earnings guidance.

When we use words such as “may,” “will,” “intend,” “should,” “believe,” “expect,” “anticipate,” “project,” “estimate” or similar expressions, we are making forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and involve risks and uncertainties. Our expected results may not be achieved, and actual results may differ materially from our expectations. This may be a result of various factors, including, but not limited to, the risks discussed above and the risks discussed in the sections captioned “Risk Factors” in this prospectus supplement and “Risk Factors” and “Cautionary Statement Concerning Forward-Looking Statements” in the accompanying prospectus and the documents that are incorporated herein by reference. We assume no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements or to update the reasons why actual results could differ from those projected in any forward-looking statements.

## USE OF PROCEEDS

The net proceeds from this offering will be approximately \$1.4 billion (\$1.6 billion if the underwriters exercise their option in full), after deducting the underwriting discount and estimated offering expenses. We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering to repay advances under our unsecured lines of credit, to repay other outstanding indebtedness and for general corporate purposes, including investing in health care and seniors housing properties. Pending such use, the net proceeds may be invested in short-term, investment grade, interest-bearing securities, certificates of deposit or indirect or guaranteed obligations of the United States. As of May 6, 2013, we had an outstanding balance of \$600 million under our unsecured lines of credit at an average rate of 1.37%. Affiliates of certain of the underwriters are lenders under our primary unsecured line of credit. See “Underwriting—Conflicts of Interest.”

## PRICE RANGE OF SHARES AND DIVIDEND HISTORY

Our common stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol “HCN.” As of May 6, 2013, there were 4,921 holders of record of our common stock. The following table sets forth, for the periods shown, the high and low sale prices of our common stock as reported by the NYSE, for the periods indicated, and cash dividends per share. On May 8, 2013, the last reported sale price of our common stock as reported by the NYSE was \$74.15 per share.

	<u>Price of shares</u>		<u>Dividends per share</u>
	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	
Year ended December 31, 2011			
First quarter . . . . .	\$52.74	\$46.75	\$0.690
Second quarter . . . . .	55.21	49.79	0.715
Third quarter . . . . .	54.63	41.03	0.715
Fourth quarter . . . . .	55.17	43.65	0.715
Year ended December 31, 2012			
First quarter . . . . .	\$57.66	\$53.26	\$0.740
Second quarter . . . . .	58.34	52.40	0.740
Third quarter . . . . .	62.80	56.48	0.740
Fourth quarter . . . . .	61.33	56.88	0.740
Year ended December 31, 2013			
First quarter . . . . .	\$67.92	\$60.78	\$0.765
Second quarter (through May 8, 2013) . . . . .	76.00	67.60	0.765(1)

- (1) Dividend to be paid on May 20, 2013 to stockholders of record as of May 7, 2013; therefore, shares purchased pursuant to this prospectus supplement will not be entitled to this dividend. The declaration and payment of quarterly dividends remains subject to review by and the approval of our board of directors.

Under the real estate investment trust rules of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, in order to maintain our status as a REIT, our deduction for dividends paid must be generally equal to at least 90% of our taxable income for the taxable year (determined without regard to the deduction for dividends paid and excluding any net capital gain). The declaration of dividends is at the discretion of our board of directors and depends upon our distributable funds, financial requirements, tax considerations and other factors. Decisions with respect to the distribution of capital gains are made on a case-by-case basis. A portion of our dividends paid may be deemed either capital gain income or a return of capital, or both, to our stockholders. We provide our stockholders an annual statement which designates the taxability of their dividends.

We have a dividend reinvestment and stock purchase plan under which stockholders of record may invest all or a portion of their dividends and up to an additional \$10,000 per month to purchase additional shares. Additionally, investors who are not stockholders of the Company may use this plan to make an initial investment in the Company’s shares of up to \$10,000. We have the discretion to grant waivers for purchases in excess of \$10,000.

## CAPITALIZATION

The table below sets forth our capitalization as of March 31, 2013 on an actual basis and on an as adjusted basis to give effect to the issuance of shares of common stock offered by this prospectus supplement (assuming no exercise of the underwriters' option) and application of the net proceeds.

	March 31, 2013	
	Actual	As Adjusted
	(in thousands)	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 269,842	\$ 977,892
Debt:		
Borrowings under unsecured lines of credit(1)	710,000	—
Borrowings under unsecured Canadian-denominated term loan due 2015(2)	245,724	245,724
Borrowings under unsecured term loan due 2016(3)	500,000	500,000
Senior notes due 2013	300,000	300,000
Senior notes due 2015	250,000	250,000
Senior notes due 2016	300,000	300,000
Senior notes due 2016	400,000	400,000
Senior notes due 2017	450,000	450,000
Senior notes due 2018	450,000	450,000
Senior notes due 2019	600,000	600,000
Senior notes due 2020	450,000	450,000
Senior notes due 2021	450,000	450,000
Senior notes due 2022	600,000	600,000
Senior notes due 2023	500,000	500,000
Senior notes due 2041	400,000	400,000
Senior notes due 2043	250,000	250,000
3.00% convertible senior notes due 2029(4)(5)	494,403	494,403
Secured debt	2,425,033	2,425,033
Capital lease obligation	80,560	80,560
Unamortized premiums/discounts and fair value adjustments	(1,792)	(1,792)
Total debt	9,853,928	9,143,928
Redeemable noncontrolling interests	33,727	33,727
Stockholders' equity:		
Preferred Stock, \$1.00 par value; authorized—50,000,000 shares		
Series H Cumulative Convertible and Redeemable Preferred Stock; 349,854 shares issued and outstanding	16,667	16,667
Series I Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock; 14,375,000 shares issued and outstanding	718,750	718,750
Series J Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock; 11,500,000 shares issued and outstanding	287,500	287,500
Common Stock, \$1.00 par value; authorized—400,000,000 shares; 261,893,455 shares issued and 261,432,764 shares outstanding, actual; and 281,893,455 shares issued and 281,432,764 shares outstanding, as adjusted(6)	261,249	281,249
Capital in excess of par value	10,599,290	11,997,340
Treasury stock	(21,238)	(21,238)
Cumulative net income	2,256,479	2,256,479
Cumulative dividends	(3,910,727)	(3,910,727)
Accumulated other comprehensive income	(33,091)	(33,091)
Other equity	5,893	5,893
Total Health Care REIT, Inc. stockholders' equity	10,180,772	11,598,822
Noncontrolling interests	202,375	202,375
Total equity	10,383,147	11,801,197
Total capitalization	\$20,270,802	\$20,978,852

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- (1) \$600 million was outstanding under our unsecured lines of credit at May 6, 2013 at an average rate of 1.37%.
  - (2) On July 30, 2012, we completed funding on a \$250 million Canadian-denominated unsecured term loan. Amount above reflects exchange rate in effect on March 31, 2013.
  - (3) On January 8, 2013, we completed funding on a \$500 million unsecured term loan.
  - (4) The amounts shown do not reflect original issue discount pursuant to ASC 470-20, *Debt with Conversion and Other Options*. Under ASC 470, an entity must separately account for the liability and equity components of convertible debt instruments (such as the convertible senior notes) that may be settled entirely or partially in cash upon conversion in a manner that reflects the issuer's economic interest cost. The effect of ASC 470 on the accounting for the convertible senior notes is that the equity component is included in the capital in excess of par value section of stockholders' equity on our consolidated balance sheet and the value of the equity component is treated as original issue discount for purposes of accounting for the debt component of the convertible senior notes. The original issue discount for the convertible senior notes is included in "Unamortized premiums/discounts and fair value adjustments."
  - (5) On April 9, 2013, we notified the holders of our 3.00% Convertible Senior Notes due 2029 that they are entitled to convert all or a portion of their 3.00% Convertible Senior Notes due 2029 into cash and, if applicable, shares of our common stock beginning on April 9, 2013 and ending at the close of business on July 9, 2013. As of May 7, 2013, a holder of \$3,000 of our 3.00% Convertible Senior Notes due 2029 had surrendered its 3.00% Convertible Senior Notes due 2029 for conversion.
  - (6) Excludes: (i) 1,035,436 shares of common stock reserved for issuance that relate to outstanding options under the 1995 Stock Incentive Plan, the Stock Plan for Non-Employee Directors and the 2005 Long-Term Incentive Plan; (ii) 3,188,941 shares of common stock reserved for issuance under our dividend reinvestment and stock purchase plan, of which 85,857 shares of common stock were issued in April 2013 (also excludes 6,896,916 additional shares of common stock that were subsequently reserved for issuance in May 2013 under our dividend reinvestment and stock purchase plan); (iii) 9,714,821 shares of common stock reserved for issuance that relate to the \$494,403,000 aggregate principal amount of 3.00% Convertible Senior Notes due 2029; (iv) 349,854 shares of common stock reserved for issuance upon conversion of the Series H Cumulative Convertible and Redeemable Preferred Stock; (v) 12,161,250 shares of common stock reserved for issuance upon conversion of the Series I Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock; and (vi) shares of common stock that may be issued upon conversion of the convertible senior notes or the Series I Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock as a make-whole premium (or similar consideration) upon the occurrence of a make-whole fundamental change or fundamental change (as applicable).

You should read this table in conjunction with the sections entitled "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" included in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2013 and our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as updated by our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 7, 2013, and our consolidated financial statements, related notes and other financial information that we have incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

## UNDERWRITING

UBS Securities LLC, Deutsche Bank Securities Inc., Wells Fargo Securities, LLC, Barclays Capital Inc., Citigroup Global Markets Inc., J.P. Morgan Securities LLC and RBC Capital Markets, LLC are acting as joint book-running managers of the offering. Subject to the terms and conditions of the underwriting agreement, the underwriters named below, through their representatives, UBS Securities LLC, Deutsche Bank Securities Inc. and Wells Fargo Securities, LLC have severally agreed to purchase from us the number of shares of common stock set forth opposite the underwriter's name at the public offering price less the underwriting discount set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement.

<u>Underwriter</u>	<u>Number of Shares</u>
UBS Securities LLC . . . . .	4,100,000
Deutsche Bank Securities Inc. . . . .	3,000,000
Wells Fargo Securities, LLC . . . . .	3,000,000
Barclays Capital Inc. . . . .	1,000,000
Citigroup Global Markets Inc. . . . .	1,000,000
J.P. Morgan Securities LLC . . . . .	1,000,000
RBC Capital Markets, LLC . . . . .	1,000,000
Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated . . . . .	500,000
Credit Agricole Securities (USA) Inc. . . . .	500,000
KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc. . . . .	500,000
Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC . . . . .	500,000
PNC Capital Markets LLC . . . . .	500,000
Raymond James & Associates, Inc. . . . .	500,000
Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Incorporated . . . . .	500,000
BB&T Capital Markets, a division of BB&T Securities, LLC . . . . .	300,000
BNY Mellon Capital Markets, LLC . . . . .	300,000
Comerica Securities, Inc. . . . .	300,000
Credit Suisse Securities (USA) LLC . . . . .	300,000
The Huntington Investment Company . . . . .	300,000
RBS Securities Inc. . . . .	300,000
SMBC Nikko Capital Markets Limited . . . . .	300,000
SunTrust Robinson Humphrey, Inc. . . . .	300,000
Total . . . . .	20,000,000

The underwriting agreement provides that the obligations of the several underwriters to purchase the shares of common stock offered hereby are subject to certain conditions precedent and that the underwriters will purchase all of the shares of common stock offered by this prospectus supplement, other than those covered by the option described below, if any of these shares are purchased.

We have been advised by the representatives of the underwriters that the underwriters propose to offer the shares of common stock to the public at the public offering price set forth on the cover of this prospectus supplement and to dealers at a price that represents a concession not in excess of \$1.5435 per share under the public offering price. After the initial offering of the shares of common stock, the representatives of the underwriters may change the public offering price and other selling terms. Sales of shares of common stock made outside the United States may be made by affiliates of the underwriters.

Our common stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "HCN."

We have granted to the underwriters an option, exercisable not later than 30 days after the date of this prospectus supplement, to purchase up to 3,000,000 additional shares of common stock at the public offering price less the underwriting discount set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement.

To the extent that the underwriters exercise this option, each of the underwriters will become obligated, subject to conditions, to purchase approximately the same percentage of these additional shares of common stock as the number of shares of common stock to be purchased by it in the above table bears to the total number of shares of common stock offered by this prospectus supplement. We will be obligated, pursuant to this option, to sell these additional shares of common stock to the underwriters to the extent this option is exercised. If any additional shares of common stock are purchased, the underwriters will offer the additional shares on the same terms as those on which the shares are being offered.

The underwriting discount per share is equal to the public offering price per share of common stock less the amount paid by the underwriters to us per share of common stock. The underwriting discount is 3.5% of the public offering price. We have agreed to pay the underwriters the following discount, assuming either no exercise or full exercise by the underwriters of the underwriters' option:

	<u>Fee per share</u>	<u>Without exercise of option</u>	<u>With full exercise of option</u>
Discount paid by us . . . . .	\$2.5725	\$51,450,000	\$59,167,500

We estimate that our share of the total expenses of this offering, including registration, filing and listing fees, printing expenses and legal and accounting expenses, but excluding the underwriting discount, will be approximately \$500,000.

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against some specified types of liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and to contribute to payments the underwriters may be required to make in respect of any of these liabilities.

We and each of our executive officers have agreed not to offer, sell or otherwise dispose of any shares of our common stock or any securities that the executive officers have, or will have, the right to acquire through the exercise of options, warrants, subscription or other rights for a period of 30 days after the date of this prospectus supplement without the prior written consent of UBS Securities LLC, Deutsche Bank Securities Inc. and Wells Fargo Securities, LLC. This consent may be given at any time without public notice.

Notwithstanding the above, we may, without the prior written consent of UBS Securities LLC, Deutsche Bank Securities Inc. and Wells Fargo Securities, LLC, (a) issue securities under our equity compensation plans for officers, employees, and non-employee directors described in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2012, (b) issue shares upon the exercise of options or other stock rights issued pursuant to our equity compensation plans for officers, employees, and non-employee directors described in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2012, (c) sell shares of common stock pursuant to our dividend reinvestment and stock purchase plan in effect as of the date of this prospectus supplement, (d) issue shares of common stock upon conversion of any of our convertible senior notes outstanding as of the date of this prospectus supplement, and (e) issue shares upon conversion of our Series H Preferred Stock, Series I Preferred Stock, or Series J Preferred Stock outstanding as of the date of this prospectus supplement.

Additionally, notwithstanding the above, each of our executive officers may, without the prior written consent of UBS Securities LLC, Deutsche Bank Securities Inc. and Wells Fargo Securities, LLC sell or otherwise dispose of shares of our common stock or securities that the executive officers have, or will have, the right to acquire through the exercise of options, warrants, subscription or other rights (a) pursuant to bona fide gifts, provided that such gifts do not exceed 75,000 shares of our common stock in the aggregate, (b) pursuant to routine dispositions under Rule 10b5-1 sales plans entered into by certain of our executive officers prior to or

after the date of this prospectus supplement, provided that such dispositions do not exceed 200,000 shares of our common stock in the aggregate and (c) shares obtained pursuant to our equity compensation plans for officers, employees, and non-employee directors, provided that such sales do not exceed 100,000 shares of our common stock in the aggregate.

In connection with the offering, the underwriters may purchase and sell shares of our common stock in the open market. These transactions may include short sales, purchases to cover positions created by short sales and stabilizing transactions.

Short sales involve the sale by the underwriters of a greater number of shares than they are required to purchase in the offering. Covered short sales are sales made in an amount not greater than the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares of common stock from us in the offering. The underwriters may close out any covered short position by either exercising their option to purchase additional shares or purchasing shares in the open market. Naked short sales are any sales in excess of this option. The underwriters must close out any naked short position by purchasing shares in the open market. A naked short position is more likely to be created if the underwriters are concerned that there may be downward pressure on the price of the shares in the open market prior to the completion of the offering. In determining the source of shares to close out the covered short position, the underwriters will consider, among other things, the price of shares available for purchase in the open market as compared to the price at which they may purchase shares through their option to purchase additional shares of common stock from us in the offering.

Stabilizing transactions consist of various bids for or purchases of our common stock made by the underwriters in the open market prior to the completion of the offering.

The underwriters may impose a penalty bid. This occurs when a particular underwriter repays to the other underwriters a portion of the underwriting discount received by it because the representatives of the underwriters have repurchased shares sold by or for the account of that underwriter in stabilizing or short covering transactions.

Purchases to cover a short position and stabilizing transactions may have the effect of preventing or slowing a decline in the market price of our common stock. Additionally, these purchases, along with the imposition of a penalty bid, may stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the market price of our common stock. As a result, the price of our common stock may be higher than the price that might otherwise exist in the open market. These transactions may be effected on the New York Stock Exchange or otherwise and may be discontinued at any time.

A prospectus supplement in electronic format may be made available on Internet websites maintained by one or more of the lead underwriters of this offering and may be made available on websites maintained by other underwriters. Other than the prospectus supplement in electronic format, the information on any underwriter's website and any information contained in any other website maintained by an underwriter is not part of the prospectus supplement or the registration statement of which the prospectus supplement forms a part.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

The underwriters and/or their affiliates have provided and in the future may provide investment banking, commercial banking and/or advisory services to us from time to time for which they have received and in the future may receive customary fees and expenses and may have entered into and in the future may enter into other transactions with us.

In addition, in the ordinary course of their business activities, the underwriters and their affiliates may make or hold a broad array of investments and actively trade debt and equity securities (or related derivative securities) and financial instruments (including bank loans) for their own account and for the accounts of their customers.

Such investments and securities activities may involve securities and/or instruments of ours or our affiliates. Certain of the underwriters or their affiliates that have a lending relationship with us routinely hedge their credit exposure to us consistent with their customary risk management policies. Typically, such underwriters and their affiliates would hedge such exposure by entering into transactions which consist of either the purchase of credit default swaps or the creation of short positions in our securities, including potentially the shares offered hereby. Any such short positions could adversely affect future trading prices of the shares offered hereby. The underwriters and their affiliates may also make investment recommendations and/or publish or express independent research views in respect of such securities or financial instruments and may hold, or recommend to clients that they acquire, long and/or short positions in such securities and instruments.

Certain affiliates of UBS Securities LLC, Deutsche Bank Securities Inc., Wells Fargo Securities, LLC, Barclays Capital Inc., Citigroup Global Markets Inc., J.P. Morgan Securities LLC, RBC Capital Markets, LLC, Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated, Credit Agricole Securities (USA) Inc., KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc., Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC, PNC Capital Markets LLC, Raymond James & Associates, Inc., BNY Mellon Capital Markets, LLC, Comerica Securities, Inc. and The Huntington Investment Company are lenders under our Credit Agreement dated January 7, 2013, as well as our Term Loan Agreement dated May 24, 2012. Certain affiliates of BB&T Capital Markets, a division of BB&T Securities, LLC, Credit Suisse Securities (USA) LLC, RBS Securities Inc., SMBC Nikko Capital Markets Limited and SunTrust Robinson Humphrey, Inc. are lenders under our Credit Agreement dated January 7, 2013. Also, Deutsche Bank Securities Inc. is the documentation agent, JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. and Bank of America, N.A. are co-syndication agents and KeyBank National Association is the administrative agent under our Credit Agreement dated January 7, 2013. In addition, Wells Fargo Bank, National Association, Citibank, N.A., PNC Bank, National Association and The Bank of New York Mellon are co-documentation agents, JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A., Royal Bank of Canada and Bank of America, N.A. are co-syndication agents, and KeyBank National Association is the administrative agent under our Term Loan Agreement dated May 24, 2012. To the extent that any portion of the net proceeds from this offering is applied to repay borrowings under our Credit Agreement or our Term Loan Agreement, certain of the underwriters and/or their respective affiliates will receive a portion of the net proceeds so applied through the repayment of borrowings under our Credit Agreement or our Term Loan Agreement. If some of the net proceeds of this offering are used to repay borrowings under our Credit Agreement or our Term Loan Agreement, it is possible that more than 5% of the proceeds of this offering (not including the underwriting discount) may be received by any one underwriter or its affiliates. Nonetheless, in accordance with the FINRA Rule 5121(f), the appointment of a qualified independent underwriter is not necessary in connection with this offering because we, the issuer of the securities in this offering, are a real estate investment trust.

## NOTICE TO INVESTORS

### Notice to Prospective Investors in the European Economic Area

In relation to each Member State of the European Economic Area which has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a “Relevant Member State”) an offer to the public of any shares which are the subject of the offering contemplated by this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus (the “Shares”) may not be made in that Relevant Member State except that an offer to the public in that Relevant Member State of any Shares may be made at any time under the following exemptions under the Prospectus Directive, if they have been implemented in that Relevant Member State:

(a) to any legal entity which is a qualified investor as defined under the Prospectus Directive;

(b) by the Managers to fewer than 100, or, if the Relevant Member State has implemented the relevant provisions of the 2010 PD Amending Directive, 150, natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive) subject to obtaining the prior consent of Lead Manager for any such offer; or

(c) in any other circumstances falling within Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive,

provided that no such offer of Shares shall result in a requirement for the Issuer or any Manager to publish a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive or supplement a prospectus pursuant to Article 16 of the Prospectus Directive.

For the purposes of this provision, the expression an “offer to the public” in relation to any Shares in any Relevant Member State means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and any Shares to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase any Shares, as the same may be varied in that Member State by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in that Member State. The expression “Prospectus Directive” means Directive 2003/71/EC (and amendments thereto, including the 2010 PD Amending Directive, to the extent implemented in the Relevant Member State), and includes any relevant implementing measure in each Relevant Member State and the expression “2010 PD Amending Directive” means Directive 2010/73/EU.

The EEA selling restriction is in addition to any other selling restrictions set out in this prospectus.

### Notice to Prospective Investors in Australia

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are not formal disclosure documents and have not been, nor will be, lodged with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission. They do not purport to contain all information that an investor or their professional advisers would expect to find in a prospectus or other disclosure document (as defined in the Corporations Act 2001 (Australia)) for the purposes of Part 6D.2 of the Corporations Act 2001 (Australia) or in a product disclosure statement for the purposes of Part 7.9 of the Corporations Act 2001 (Australia), in either case, in relation to the securities.

The securities are not being offered in Australia to “retail clients” as defined in sections 761G and 761GA of the Corporations Act 2001 (Australia). This offering is being made in Australia solely to “wholesale clients” for the purposes of section 761G of the Corporations Act 2001 (Australia) and, as such, no prospectus, product disclosure statement or other disclosure document in relation to the securities has been, or will be, prepared.

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus do not constitute an offer in Australia other than to persons who do not require disclosure under Part 6D.2 of the Corporations Act 2001 (Australia) and who are wholesale clients for the purposes of section 761G of the Corporations Act 2001 (Australia). By submitting an application for our securities, you represent and warrant to us that you are a person who does not require disclosure under Part 6D.2 and who is a wholesale client for the purposes of section 761G of the Corporations

Act 2001 (Australia). If any recipient of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is not a wholesale client, no offer of, or invitation to apply for, our securities shall be deemed to be made to such recipient and no applications for our securities will be accepted from such recipient. Any offer to a recipient in Australia, and any agreement arising from acceptance of such offer, is personal and may only be accepted by the recipient. In addition, by applying for our securities you undertake to us that, for a period of 12 months from the date of issue of the securities, you will not transfer any interest in the securities to any person in Australia other than to a person who does not require disclosure under Part 6D.2 and who is a wholesale client.

### **Notice to Prospective Investors in Hong Kong**

The contents of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus have not been reviewed by any regulatory authority in Hong Kong. You are advised to exercise caution in relation to the offer. If you are in any doubt about any of the contents of this prospectus, you should obtain independent professional advice. Please note that (i) our securities may not be offered or sold in Hong Kong, by means of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus supplement or any document other than to “professional investors” within the meaning of Part I of Schedule 1 of the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap.571, Laws of Hong Kong) (SFO) and any rules made thereunder, or in other circumstances which do not result in the document being a “prospectus” within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap.32, Laws of Hong Kong) (CO) or which do not constitute an offer or invitation to the public for the purpose of the CO or the SFO, and (ii) no advertisement, invitation or document relating to our securities may be issued or may be in the possession of any person for the purpose of issue (in each case whether in Hong Kong or elsewhere) which is directed at, or the contents of which are likely to be accessed or read by, the public in Hong Kong (except if permitted to do so under the securities laws of Hong Kong) other than with respect to the securities which are or are intended to be disposed of only to persons outside Hong Kong or only to “professional investors” within the meaning of the SFO and any rules made thereunder.

### **Notice to Prospective Investors in Japan**

Our securities have not been and will not be registered under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law of Japan (the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law) and our securities will not be offered or sold, directly or indirectly, in Japan, or to, or for the benefit of, any resident of Japan (which term as used herein means any person resident in Japan, including any corporation or other entity organized under the laws of Japan), or to others for re-offering or resale, directly or indirectly, in Japan, or to a resident of Japan, except pursuant to an exemption from the registration requirements of, and otherwise in compliance with, the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law and any other applicable laws, regulations and ministerial guidelines of Japan.

### **Notice to Prospective Investors in Singapore**

This document has not been registered as a prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, this document and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of our securities may not be circulated or distributed, nor may our securities be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to persons in Singapore other than (i) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the Securities and Futures Act, Chapter 289 of Singapore (the “SFA”), (ii) to a relevant person pursuant to Section 275(1), or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A), and in accordance with the conditions specified in Section 275, of the SFA, or (iii) otherwise pursuant to, and in accordance with the conditions of, any other applicable provision of the SFA.

Where our securities are subscribed or purchased under Section 275 by a relevant person which is:

(a) a corporation (which is not an accredited investor (as defined in Section 4A of the SFA)) the sole business of which is to hold investments and the entire share capital of which is owned by one or more individuals, each of whom is an accredited investor; or

(b) a trust (where the trustee is not an accredited investor) whose sole purpose is to hold investments and each beneficiary of the trust is an individual who is an accredited investor, securities (as defined in Section 239(1) of the SFA) of that corporation or the beneficiaries' rights and interest (howsoever described) in that trust shall not be transferred within six months after that corporation or that trust has acquired our securities pursuant to an offer made under Section 275 except:

- (1) to an institutional investor or to a relevant person defined in Section 275(2) of the SFA, or to any person arising from an offer referred to in Section 275(1A) or Section 276(4)(i)(B) of the SFA;
- (2) where no consideration is or will be given for the transfer;
- (3) where the transfer is by operation of law; or
- (4) as specified in Section 276(7) of the SFA.

### **Notice to Prospective Investors in Switzerland**

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus do not constitute an issue prospectus pursuant to Article 652a or Article 1156 of the Swiss Code of Obligations ("CO") and the shares will not be listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange. Therefore, this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus may not comply with the disclosure standards of the CO and/or the listing rules (including any prospectus schemes) of the SIX Swiss Exchange. Accordingly, the shares may not be offered to the public in or from Switzerland, but only to a selected and limited circle of investors, which do not subscribe to the shares with a view to distribution.

### **Notice to Prospective Investors in the United Kingdom**

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are only being distributed to and are only directed at: (1) persons who are outside the United Kingdom; (2) investment professionals falling within Article 19(5) of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) Order 2005 (the "Order"); or (3) high net worth companies, and other persons to whom it may lawfully be communicated, falling within Article 49(2)(a) to (d) of the Order (all such persons falling within (1)-(3) together being referred to as "relevant persons"). The shares are only available to, and any invitation, offer or agreement to subscribe, purchase or otherwise acquire such shares will be engaged in only with, relevant persons. Any person who is not a relevant person should not act or rely on this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or any of its contents.

### **Notice to Prospective Investors in the Dubai International Financial Centre**

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus relate to an Exempt Offer in accordance with the Offered Securities Rules of the Dubai Financial Services Authority ("DFSA"). This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are intended for distribution only to persons of a type specified in the Offered Securities Rules of the DFSA. They must not be delivered to, or relied on by, any other person. The DFSA has no responsibility for reviewing or verifying any documents in connection with Exempt Offers. The DFSA has not approved this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus nor taken steps to verify the information set forth herein and has no responsibility for the prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. The securities to which this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus relate may be illiquid and/or subject to restrictions on their resale. Prospective purchasers of the securities offered should conduct their own due diligence on the securities. If you do not understand the contents of this prospectus you should consult an authorized financial advisor.

## LEGAL MATTERS

Certain legal matters regarding the shares of common stock offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP, Toledo, Ohio. Arnold & Porter LLP will pass upon certain federal income tax matters relating to us. Calfee, Halter & Griswold LLP, Cleveland, Ohio will pass upon certain matters for the underwriters.

## EXPERTS

Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, has audited our consolidated financial statements and schedules included in our Current Report on Form 8-K dated May 7, 2013, and the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2012, included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as set forth in their reports, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Our financial statements and schedules are incorporated herein by reference in reliance on Ernst & Young LLP's reports, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

The combined financial statements of Sunrise Operations Bagshot II Limited, Sunrise Operations Sevenoaks Limited, Sunrise Operations Winchester Limited, Sunrise of Bagshot II Limited, Sunrise of Sevenoaks Limited and Sunrise of Winchester Limited as of and for the year ended December 31, 2011; the combined financial statements of Sunrise Operations UK Limited, Sunrise Operations VW Limited, Sunrise Operations Elstree Limited, Sunrise Operations Banstead Limited, Sunrise Operations Purley Limited, Sunrise Home Help Services Limited, Sunrise Home Help Services VW Limited, Sunrise Home Help Elstree Limited, Sunrise Home Help Banstead Limited and Sunrise Home Help Purley Limited as of and for the year ended December 31, 2011, and; the combined financial statements of Sunrise Operations Knowle Limited, Sunrise Operations Hale Barns Limited, Sunrise of Knowle Limited and Sunrise of Hale Barns Limited as of and for the year ended December 31, 2011, appearing in our Current Report on Form 8-K/A filed on March 25, 2013, have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent accountants, as set forth in their reports thereon included therein and incorporated herein by reference. Such financial statements have been incorporated herein by reference in reliance on such reports given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

Ernst & Young LLP, independent auditors, have audited the consolidated financial statements of Sunrise Senior Living, Inc. as of December 31, 2012 and 2011 and for the years ended December 31, 2012, 2011 and 2010 and the consolidated financial statements of Master CNLSun Dev I, LLC as of December 31, 2012 and 2011 and for the years ended December 31, 2012, 2011 and 2010, as set forth in their reports appearing in our Current Report on Form 8-K/A filed on March 25, 2013, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Such financial statements have been incorporated herein by reference in reliance on Ernst & Young LLP's reports, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

## WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

The prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are part of a registration statement that we filed with the SEC covering the securities that may be offered under this prospectus supplement. The registration statement, including the attached exhibits and schedules, contain additional relevant information about the securities.

Additionally, we file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC, all of which are made available, free of charge, on our Internet website at <http://www.hcreit.com> as soon as reasonably practicable after they are filed with, or furnished to, the SEC. The information on or connected to our

Internet website is not, and shall not be deemed to be, a part of, or incorporated into this prospectus supplement. You can review these SEC filings and the registration statement by accessing the SEC's Internet website at <http://www.sec.gov>. You also may read and copy the registration statement and any reports, statements or other information on file at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20549. You can request copies of those documents upon payment of a duplicating fee to the SEC. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the public reference room. These filings with the SEC are also available through the New York Stock Exchange, 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005.

### **Incorporation of Information Filed with the SEC**

The SEC allows us to "incorporate by reference" the information we file with the SEC, which means:

- we consider incorporated documents to be part of this prospectus supplement;
- we may disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents; and
- information we subsequently file with the SEC will automatically update and supersede the information in this prospectus supplement.

### **Documents Incorporated By Reference**

This prospectus incorporates by reference the following documents we filed with the SEC:

- Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012;
- Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2013;
- Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on January 11, 2013, as amended by Amendment No. 1 to Form 8-K filed on March 25, 2013; March 7, 2013; March 27, 2013; May 6, 2013; and May 7, 2013 (except that the information furnished pursuant to Item 2.02 of Form 8-K and the exhibits relating to such information are not incorporated into this prospectus supplement);
- The description of our common stock as set forth in our registration statement filed under the Exchange Act on Form 8-A on June 17, 1985, including any amendment or report for the purpose of updating such description;
- The description of the rights to purchase our Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock, par value \$1.00 per share, associated with our common stock, as set forth in our registration statement filed under the Exchange Act on Form 8-A on August 3, 1994, including any amendment or report for the purpose of updating such description;
- The description of our 6.50% Series I Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock as set forth in the registration statement filed under the Exchange Act on Form 8-A on March 3, 2011, including any amendment or report for the purpose of updating such description;
- The description of our 6.50% Series J Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock as set forth in the registration statement filed under the Exchange Act on Form 8-A on March 6, 2012, including any amendment or report for the purpose of updating such description; and
- All subsequent documents filed by us under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act of 1934 after the date of this prospectus supplement and before the date this offering is terminated;

other than the portions of such documents that by statute or rule, by designation in such document or otherwise, are not deemed to be filed with the SEC or are not required to be incorporated herein by reference.

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus summarize material provisions of contracts and other documents to which we refer. Since this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus may not contain all the information that you may find important, you should review the full text of those documents. Upon request, we will provide each person receiving this prospectus supplement and the accompanying

prospectus a free copy, without exhibits, of any or all documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. You may direct such requests to:

Erin C. Ibele  
Senior Vice President—Administration and Corporate Secretary  
Health Care REIT, Inc.  
4500 Dorr Street  
Toledo, Ohio 43615  
(419) 247-2800

# HEALTH CARE REIT, INC.

## DEBT SECURITIES COMMON STOCK PREFERRED STOCK DEPOSITARY SHARES WARRANTS UNITS

We may periodically offer and sell, in one or more offerings:

- debt securities
- shares of common stock
- shares of preferred stock
- depositary shares
- warrants to purchase debt securities, preferred stock, depositary shares or common stock
- units consisting of one or more debt securities or other securities

We may offer these securities from time to time on terms we will determine at the time of offering. We will provide the specific terms of the securities being offered in supplements to this prospectus prepared in connection with each offering. We may also authorize one or more free writing prospectuses to be provided to you in connection with an offering. You should read this prospectus, the supplement for the specific security being offered and any related free writing prospectus carefully before you invest.

We may offer these securities directly, through agents we designate periodically, or to or through underwriters or dealers. If designated agents or underwriters are involved in the sale of any of the securities, we will disclose in the prospectus supplement their names, any applicable purchase price, fee, compensation arrangement between or among them, and our net proceeds from such sale. See “Plan of Distribution.” No securities may be sold without the delivery of the applicable prospectus supplement describing the securities and the method and terms of their offering.

Our shares of common stock are listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol “HCN.” Our executive offices are located at 4500 Dorr Street, Toledo, Ohio 43615, telephone number: 419-247-2800, facsimile: 419-247-2826, and website: [www.hcreit.com](http://www.hcreit.com). Unless specifically noted otherwise in this prospectus, all references to “we,” “us,” “our,” or the “Company” refer to Health Care REIT, Inc. and its subsidiaries.

**Investing in our securities involves risk. See “Risk Factors” beginning on page 1 of this prospectus.**

The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities and it is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.

**Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.**

The date of this prospectus is May 4, 2012.

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## **ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS**

This prospectus is part of a registration statement we filed with the SEC using a “shelf” registration process. Under this shelf process, we may sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus from time to time in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides you only with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement containing specific information about the terms of that offering. We may also authorize one or more free writing prospectuses to be provided to you in connection with an offering. The prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus may also add to, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read this prospectus, any prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus together with additional information described under the heading “Where You Can Find Additional Information” and “Documents Incorporated By Reference.”

This prospectus may not be used to consummate a sale of securities unless it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement. You should rely only on the information contained and incorporated by reference in this prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus. Neither we nor the underwriters have authorized any other person to provide you with different or inconsistent information from that contained in this prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. You should assume that the information in this prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus, as well as information we previously filed with the SEC and incorporated by reference, is accurate only as of the date on the front cover of this prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

This prospectus contains and incorporates by reference market data and industry statistics and forecasts that are based on independent industry publications and other publicly available information. Although we believe that these sources are reliable, we do not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of this information and we have not independently verified this information. Although we are not aware of any misstatements regarding the market and industry data presented in this prospectus and the documents incorporated herein by reference, these estimates involve risks and uncertainties and are subject to change based on various factors, including those discussed under the heading “Risk Factors” contained in the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus, and under similar headings in the other documents that are incorporated by reference into this prospectus. Accordingly, investors should not place undue reliance on this information.

## **RISK FACTORS**

Our business is subject to certain risks, which are discussed in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, as amended or updated, under the headings “Business,” “Risk Factors” and “Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations.” Our expected results may not be achieved, and actual results may differ materially from our expectations. This may be a result of various factors, including, but not limited to:

- the status of the economy;
- the status of capital markets, including availability and cost of capital;
- issues facing the health care industry, including compliance with, and changes to, regulations and payment policies, responding to government investigations and punitive settlements and operators’/tenants’ difficulty in cost-effectively obtaining and maintaining adequate liability and other insurance;
- changes in financing terms;
- competition within the health care, seniors housing and life science industries;
- negative developments in the operating results or financial condition of operators/tenants, including, but not limited to, their ability to pay rent and repay loans;
- our ability to transition or sell facilities with profitable results;
- the failure to make new investments as and when anticipated;

- acts of God affecting our properties;
- our ability to re-lease space at similar rates as vacancies occur;
- our ability to timely reinvest sale proceeds at similar rates to assets sold;
- operator/tenant or joint venture partner bankruptcies or insolvencies;
- the cooperation of joint venture partners;
- government regulations affecting Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement rates and operational requirements;
- regulatory approval and market acceptance of the products and technologies of life science tenants;
- liability or contract claims by or against operators/tenants;
- unanticipated difficulties and/or expenditures relating to future acquisitions;
- environmental laws affecting our properties;
- changes in rules or practices governing our financial reporting;
- the movement of U.S. and foreign exchange rates; and
- legal and operational matters, including real estate investment trust qualification and key management personnel recruitment and retention.

Updated information relating to such risks, as well as additional risks specific to the securities to be offered hereby, will be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to such offered securities.

#### **CAUTIONARY STATEMENT CONCERNING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS**

This prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus contain “forward-looking statements” as that term is defined under federal securities laws. These forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, those regarding:

- the possible expansion of our portfolio;
- the sale of properties;
- the performance of our operators/tenants and properties;
- our ability to enter into agreements with new viable tenants for vacant space or for properties that we take back from financially troubled tenants, if any;
- our occupancy rates;
- our ability to acquire, develop and/or manage properties;
- our ability to make distributions to stockholders;
- our policies and plans regarding investments, financings and other matters;
- our ability to successfully manage the risks associated with international expansion and operations;
- our tax status as a real estate investment trust;
- our critical accounting policies;
- our ability to appropriately balance the use of debt and equity;
- our ability to access capital markets or other sources of funds; and
- our ability to meet earnings guidance.

When we use words such as “may,” “will,” “intend,” “should,” “believe,” “expect,” “anticipate,” “project,” “estimate” or similar expressions, we are making forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and involve risks and uncertainties.

We assume no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements or to update the reasons why actual results could differ from those projected in any forward-looking statements.

### **WHERE YOU CAN FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we have filed with the SEC covering the securities that may be offered under this prospectus. The registration statement, including the attached exhibits and schedules, contains additional relevant information about the securities.

Additionally, we file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC, all of which are made available, free of charge, on our Internet website at <http://www.hcreit.com> as soon as reasonably practicable after they are filed with, or furnished to, the SEC. The information on or connected to our Internet website is not, and shall not be deemed to be, a part of, or incorporated by reference into this prospectus. You can review these SEC filings and the registration statement by accessing the SEC's Internet site at <http://www.sec.gov>. You also may read and copy the registration statement and any reports, statements or other information on file at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20549. You can request copies of those documents upon payment of a duplicating fee to the SEC. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the public reference room. These filings with the SEC are also available through the New York Stock Exchange, 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005.

This prospectus does not contain all the information set forth in the registration statement. We have omitted certain parts consistent with SEC rules. For further information, please see the registration statement.

### **DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE**

The SEC allows us to "incorporate by reference" the information we file with the SEC, which means:

- we consider incorporated documents to be part of this prospectus;
- we may disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents; and
- information we subsequently file with the SEC will automatically update and supersede the information in this prospectus.

This prospectus incorporates by reference the following documents we filed with the SEC; provided, however, that we are not incorporating any documents or information deemed to have been furnished and not filed in accordance with SEC rules:

- Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011, including information specifically incorporated by reference into the Form 10-K from our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A filed on March 29, 2012;
- Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on January 31, 2012, February 27, 2012, February 29, 2012, March 5, 2012, March 8, 2012, March 21, 2012, March 29, 2012 and April 4, 2012;
- The description of our common stock as set forth in our registration statement filed under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Exchange Act") on Form 8-A on June 17, 1985, including any amendment or report for the purpose of updating such description;
- The description of the rights to purchase our Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock, par value \$1.00 per share, associated with our common stock, as set forth in our registration statement filed under the Exchange Act on Form 8-A on August 3, 1994, including any amendment or report for the purpose of updating such description;
- The description of our 6.50% Series I Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock as set forth in the registration statement filed under the Exchange Act on Form 8-A on March 3, 2011, including any amendment or report for the purpose of updating such description;

- The description of our 6.50% Series J Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock as set forth in the registration statement filed under the Exchange Act on Form 8-A on March 6, 2012, including any amendment or report for the purpose of updating such description; and
- All subsequent documents filed by us under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act after the date of this prospectus and before the termination of the offering;

other than the portions of such documents that by statute or rule, by designation in such document or otherwise, are not deemed to be filed with the SEC or are not required to be incorporated herein by reference.

This prospectus summarizes material provisions of contracts and other documents to which we refer. Since this prospectus may not contain all the information that you may find important, you should review the full text of those documents. Upon oral or written request, we will provide each person receiving this prospectus a free copy of any or all documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus. You may direct such requests to:

Erin C. Ibele  
Senior Vice President-Administration and Corporate Secretary  
Health Care REIT, Inc.  
4500 Dorr Street  
Toledo, Ohio 43615  
(419) 247-2800

## THE COMPANY

We are a real estate investment trust that has been at the forefront of seniors housing and health care real estate since the Company was founded in 1970. We are an S&P 500 company headquartered in Toledo, Ohio and our portfolio spans the full spectrum of seniors housing and health care real estate, including seniors housing communities, skilled nursing facilities, medical office buildings, inpatient and outpatient medical centers and life science facilities. Our capital programs, when combined with comprehensive planning, development and property management services, make us a single-source solution for acquiring, planning, developing, managing, repositioning and monetizing real estate assets.

Our principal executive offices are located at 4500 Dorr Street, Toledo, Ohio, 43615, and our telephone number is (419) 247-2800. Our website address is [www.hcreit.com](http://www.hcreit.com). The information on our website is not part of this prospectus.

Our primary objectives are to protect stockholder capital and enhance stockholder value. We seek to pay consistent cash dividends to stockholders and create opportunities to increase dividend payments to stockholders as a result of annual increases in rental and interest income and portfolio growth. To meet these objectives, we invest across the full spectrum of seniors housing and health care real estate and diversify our investment portfolio by property type, customer and geographic location.

For additional information regarding our business, please see the information under the heading “Business” in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

## USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless otherwise described in a prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus we have authorized for use in connection with a specific offering, we intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of any securities under this prospectus for general corporate purposes which may include repaying advances under our unsecured lines of credit, repaying other outstanding indebtedness and investing in health care and seniors housing properties. Until the proceeds from a sale of securities by us are applied to their intended uses, they may be invested in short-term, investment grade, interest-bearing securities, certificates of deposit or indirect or guaranteed obligations of the United States. We will include a more detailed description of the use of proceeds of any specific offering in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to any such offering or in any free writing prospectus we have authorized for use in connection with any such offering.

**RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND  
EARNINGS TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES  
AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS**

The table below sets forth our ratios of earnings to fixed charges and earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends for the periods indicated. The ratio of earnings to fixed charges was computed by dividing earnings by our fixed charges. The ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends was computed by dividing earnings by our combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends. For purposes of calculating these ratios, “earnings” includes income from continuing operations before extraordinary items, excluding the equity earnings in a less than 50% owned subsidiary, plus fixed charges and reduced by capitalized interest. “Fixed charges” consists of interest on all indebtedness and the amortization of loan expenses or interest expensed and capitalized and the amortized premiums, discounts and capitalized expenses related to indebtedness.

	Year Ended December 31,				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Consolidated ratio of earnings to fixed charges (unaudited) . . .	1.72	1.85	1.92	1.43	1.51
Consolidated ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends (unaudited) . . . . .	1.43	1.58	1.64	1.25	1.27

In computing the ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends, preferred stock dividends consist of dividends on the following:

- 4,000,000 shares of 7<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>% Series D Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock issued in July 2003, which were redeemed by the Company in April 2012.
- 1,060,000 shares of 6% Series E Cumulative Convertible and Redeemable Preferred Stock issued in September 2003, which were eliminated from our certificate of incorporation in November 2010.
- 7,000,000 shares of 7<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>% Series F Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock issued in September 2004, which were redeemed by the Company in April 2012.
- 2,100,000 shares of 7.5% Series G Cumulative Convertible Preferred Stock issued in December 2006, which were eliminated from our certificate of incorporation in November 2010.
- 349,854 shares of 6% Series H Cumulative Convertible and Redeemable Preferred Stock issued in December 2010.
- 14,375,000 shares of 6.50% Series I Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock issued in March 2011.

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE OFFERED SECURITIES**

We may offer under this prospectus one or more of the following categories of our securities:

- debt securities, in one or more series;
- shares of our common stock, par value \$1.00 per share;
- shares of our preferred stock, par value \$1.00 per share, in one or more series;
- depositary shares, representing interests in our preferred stock, in one or more series;
- warrants to purchase any of the foregoing securities; and
- units consisting of any combination of the foregoing securities.

The terms of any specific offering of securities, including the terms of any units offered, will be set forth in a prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus relating to such offering.

Our certificate of incorporation authorizes us to issue 400,000,000 shares of common stock and 50,000,000 shares of preferred stock. Of our preferred stock:

- 13,000 shares have been designated as Junior Participating Preferred Stock, Series A;
- 4,000,000 shares have been designated as  $7\frac{7}{8}\%$  Series D Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock;
- 7,000,000 shares have been designated as  $7\frac{5}{8}\%$  Series F Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock;
- 349,854 shares have been designated as 6% Series H Cumulative Convertible and Redeemable Preferred Stock;
- 14,375,000 shares have been designated as 6.50% Series I Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock; and
- 11,500,000 shares have been designated as 6.50% Series J Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock.

As of April 30, 2012, we had outstanding 213,818,411 shares of common stock, 349,854 shares of Series H Preferred Stock, 14,375,000 shares of Series I Preferred Stock and 11,500,000 shares of Series J Preferred Stock. All of the outstanding shares of Series D Preferred Stock and Series F Preferred Stock were redeemed by the Company in April 2012.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol “HCN.” We intend to apply to list any additional shares of common stock that are issued and sold hereunder. Our Series I Preferred Stock and Series J Preferred Stock are listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbols “HCN PrI” and “HCN PrJ,” respectively. We may apply to list shares of any series of preferred stock or any depositary shares which are offered and sold hereunder, as described in the applicable prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus relating to such preferred stock or depositary shares.

For a discussion of the taxation of the Company and the material federal tax consequences to you as a holder of our common stock and debt securities offered under this prospectus, see “Item 1 — Business — Taxation — Federal Income Tax Considerations” included in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K. The applicable prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus delivered with this prospectus will provide any necessary information about additional federal income tax considerations, if any, related to the particular securities being offered.

## **DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES**

The debt securities sold under this prospectus will be our direct obligations, which may be secured or unsecured, and which may be senior or subordinated indebtedness. The debt securities may be guaranteed on a secured or unsecured, senior or subordinated basis, by one or more of our subsidiaries. The debt securities will be issued under one or more indentures between us and a specified trustee. Any indenture will be subject to and governed by the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended. The statements made in this prospectus relating to any indentures and the debt securities to be issued under the indentures are summaries of certain provisions or anticipated provisions of the indentures.

The following is a summary of the material terms of our debt securities. Because it is a summary, it does not contain all of the information that may be important to you. If you want more information, you should read the indenture, dated as of March 15, 2010, between us and The Bank of New York Mellon Trust, N.A., as trustee (the “senior debt indenture”), for senior debt securities and the forms of indentures for senior subordinated and junior subordinated debt securities which we have filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. We will file any final indentures for senior subordinated and junior subordinated debt securities and supplemental indentures for senior debt securities or senior subordinated or junior subordinated debt securities if we issue debt securities of this type. See “Where You Can Find Additional Information.” This summary is also subject to and qualified by reference to the descriptions of the particular terms of the securities described in the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus.

## General

We may issue debt securities that rank “senior,” “senior subordinated” or “junior subordinated.” The debt securities that we refer to as “senior” will be our direct obligations and will rank equally and ratably in right of payment with our other indebtedness not subordinated. We may issue debt securities that will be subordinated in right of payment to the prior payment in full of senior debt, as defined in the applicable prospectus supplement or any related free writing prospectus, and may rank equally and ratably with the other senior subordinated indebtedness. We refer to these as “senior subordinated” securities. We may also issue debt securities that may be subordinated in right of payment to the senior subordinated securities. These would be “junior subordinated” securities. We have filed with the registration statement, of which this prospectus is a part, the senior debt indenture and two separate forms of indenture, one for the senior subordinated securities and one for the junior subordinated securities. We refer to each of these three indentures as an “indenture.” We refer to senior subordinated and junior subordinated securities as “subordinated.”

We may issue the debt securities without limit as to aggregate principal amount, in one or more series, in each case as we establish in one or more supplemental indentures. We need not issue all debt securities of one series at the same time. Unless we otherwise provide, we may reopen a series, without the consent of the holders of the series, for issuances of additional securities of that series.

The senior debt indenture provides and we anticipate that any other indenture will provide that we may, but need not, designate more than one trustee under an indenture, each with respect to one or more series of debt securities. Any trustee under any indenture may resign or be removed with respect to one or more series of debt securities, and we may appoint a successor trustee to act with respect to that series. The applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus will describe the specific terms relating to the series of debt securities we will offer, including, where applicable, the following:

- the title and series designation and whether they are senior securities, senior subordinated securities or subordinated securities;
- the aggregate principal amount of the securities;
- the percentage of the principal amount at which we will issue the debt securities and, if other than the principal amount of the debt securities, the portion of the principal amount of the debt securities payable upon maturity of the debt securities;
- if convertible, the securities into which they are convertible, the initial conversion price, the conversion period and any other terms governing such conversion;
- the stated maturity date;
- any fixed or variable interest rate or rates per annum;
- if other than at the corporate trust office of the trustee, the place where principal, premium, if any, and interest will be payable and where the debt securities can be surrendered for transfer, exchange or conversion;
- the date from which interest may accrue and any interest payment dates;
- any sinking fund requirements;
- any provisions for redemption, including the redemption price and any remarketing arrangements;
- any provisions for denomination or payment of the securities in a foreign currency or units of two or more foreign currencies;
- the events of default and covenants of such securities, to the extent different from or in addition to those described in this prospectus;
- whether we will issue the debt securities in certificated or book-entry form;
- whether the debt securities will be in registered or bearer form and, if in registered form, the denominations if other than in even multiples of \$1,000 and, if in bearer form, the denominations and terms and conditions relating thereto;

- whether we will issue any of the debt securities in permanent global form and, if so, the terms and conditions, if any, upon which interests in the global security may be exchanged, in whole or in part, for the individual debt securities represented by the global security;
- the applicability, if any, of the defeasance and covenant defeasance provisions described in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement;
- any provisions for payment of additional amounts on the securities in respect of any tax, assessment or governmental charge and rights for us to redeem the debt securities instead of making this payment;
- the subordination provisions, if any, relating to the debt securities;
- if the debt securities are to be issued upon the exercise of debt warrants, the time, manner and place for them to be authenticated and delivered;
- whether any of our subsidiaries will be bound by the terms of the indenture, in particular any restrictive covenants;
- the provisions relating to any security provided for the debt securities; and
- the provisions relating to any guarantee of the debt securities.

We may issue debt securities at less than the principal amount payable at maturity. We refer to these securities as “original issue discount” securities. If material or applicable, we will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement special U.S. federal income tax, accounting and other considerations applicable to original issue discount securities.

Except as may be described in any prospectus supplement, an indenture will not contain any provisions that would limit our ability to incur indebtedness or that would afford holders of the debt securities protection in the event of a highly leveraged or similar transaction involving us or in the event of a change of control. You should review carefully the applicable prospectus supplement for information with respect to events of default and covenants applicable to the securities being offered.

### **Denominations, Interest, Registration and Transfer**

Unless otherwise described in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will issue the debt securities of any series that are registered securities in denominations that are even multiples of \$1,000, other than global securities, which may be of any denomination.

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will pay the interest, principal and any premium at the corporate trust office of the trustee, such other address as the trustee may designate from time to time by notice to the holders and the Company or the principal corporate trust office of any successor trustee. At our option, however, we may make payment of interest by check mailed to the address of the person entitled to the payment as it appears in the applicable register or by wire transfer of funds to that person at an account maintained within the United States.

If we do not punctually pay or otherwise provide for interest on any interest payment date, the defaulted interest will be paid either:

- to the person in whose name the debt security is registered at the close of business on a special record date the trustee will fix; or
- in any other lawful manner, all as the applicable indenture describes.

You may have your debt securities divided into more debt securities of smaller denominations or combined into fewer debt securities of larger denominations, as long as the total principal amount is not changed. We call this an “exchange.” You may exchange or transfer debt securities at the office of the applicable trustee. The trustee acts as our agent for registering debt securities in the names of holders and transferring debt securities. We may change this appointment to another entity or perform it ourselves.

The entity performing the role of maintaining the list of registered holders is called the “registrar.” It will also perform transfers. You will not be required to pay a service charge to transfer or exchange debt securities, but you may be required to pay for any tax or other governmental charge associated with the exchange or transfer. The registrar will make the transfer or exchange only if it is satisfied with your proof of ownership.

### **Merger, Consolidation or Sale of Assets**

Under an indenture, we are or generally will be permitted to consolidate or merge with another company. In addition, we are or will be permitted to sell substantially all of our assets to another company, or to buy substantially all of the assets of another company. However, we may not take any of these actions unless the following conditions are met:

- if we merge out of existence or sell our assets, the other company must be an entity organized under the laws of one of the states of the United States or the District of Columbia or under United States federal law and must agree to be legally responsible for our debt securities; and
- immediately after the merger, sale of assets or other transaction, we may not be in default on the debt securities. A default for this purpose would include any event that would be an event of default if the requirements regarding notice of default or continuing default for a specific period of time were disregarded.

### **Certain Covenants**

*Existence.* Except as permitted and described above under “— Merger, Consolidation or Sale of Assets,” we will agree to do all things necessary to preserve and keep our existence, rights and franchises, provided that it is in our best interests for the conduct of business.

*Provisions of Financial Information.* To the extent permitted by law, we will agree to file all annual, quarterly and other reports and financial statements with the SEC and the trustee on or before the applicable SEC filing dates whether or not we remain required to do so under the Exchange Act.

*Additional Covenants.* Any additional or different covenants or modifications to the foregoing covenants with respect to any series of debt securities will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

### **Events of Default and Related Matters**

*Events of Default.* The term “event of default” for any series of debt securities means any of the following:

- We do not pay the principal or any premium on a debt security of that series within 30 days after its maturity date.
- We do not pay interest on a debt security of that series within 30 days after its due date.
- We do not deposit any sinking fund payment for that series within 30 days after its due date.
- We remain in breach of any other term of the applicable indenture (other than a term added to the indenture solely for the benefit of another series) for 60 days after we receive a written notice of default from the trustee or holders of at least a majority in principal amount of debt securities of the affected series specifying the breach and requiring it to be remedied.
- We default under any of our other indebtedness in specified amounts after the expiration of any applicable grace period, which default results in the acceleration of the maturity of such indebtedness. Such default is not an event of default if the other indebtedness is discharged, or the acceleration is rescinded or annulled, within a period of 10 days after we receive a written notice from the trustee or holders of at least a majority in principal amount of debt securities of the affected series specifying the default and requiring that we discharge the other indebtedness or cause the acceleration to be rescinded or annulled.
- We or one of our “significant subsidiaries,” if any, files for bankruptcy or certain other events in bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization occur. The term “significant subsidiary” means each of our significant subsidiaries, if any, as defined in Regulation S-X under the Securities Act of 1933 (the “Securities Act”).
- Any other event of default described in the applicable prospectus supplement occurs.

*Remedies if an Event of Default Occurs.* If an event of default has occurred and has not been cured, the trustee or the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the debt securities of the affected series may declare the entire principal amount of all the debt securities of that series to be due and immediately payable. If an event of default occurs because of certain events in bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization, the principal amount of all the debt securities of that series will be automatically accelerated, without any action by the trustee or any holder. At any time after the trustee or the holders have accelerated any series of debt securities, but before a judgment or decree for payment of the money due has been obtained, the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the debt securities of the affected series may, under certain circumstances, rescind and annul such acceleration.

The trustee will be required to give notice to the holders of debt securities within 90 days after a default under the applicable indenture unless the default has been cured or waived. The trustee may withhold notice to the holders of any series of debt securities of any default with respect to that series, except a default in the payment of the principal of or interest on any debt security of that series, if specified responsible officers of the trustee in good faith determine that withholding the notice is in the interest of the holders.

Except in cases of default, where the trustee has some special duties, the trustee is not required to take any action under the applicable indenture at the request of any holders unless the holders offer the trustee reasonable protection from expenses and liability. We refer to this as an “indemnity.” If reasonable indemnity satisfactory to it is provided, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding securities of the relevant series may direct the time, method and place of conducting any lawsuit or other formal legal action seeking any remedy available to the trustee. These majority holders may also direct the trustee in performing any other action under the applicable indenture, subject to certain limitations.

Before you bypass the trustee and bring your own lawsuit or other formal legal action or take other steps to enforce your rights or protect your interests relating to the debt securities, the following must occur:

- you must give the trustee written notice that an event of default has occurred and remains uncured;
- the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of all outstanding securities of the relevant series must make a written request that the trustee take action because of the default, and must offer reasonable indemnity to the trustee against the cost and other liabilities of taking that action; and
- the trustee must have not taken action for 60 days after receipt of the notice and offer of indemnity.

However, you are entitled at any time to bring a lawsuit for the payment of money due on your security after its due date.

Every year we will furnish to the trustee a written statement by certain of our officers certifying that to their knowledge we are in compliance with the applicable indenture, or else specifying any default.

### **Modification of an Indenture**

There are three types of changes we can make to the indentures and the debt securities:

*Changes Requiring Your Approval.* First, there are changes we cannot make to your debt securities without your specific approval. The following is a list of those types of changes:

- change the stated maturity of the principal or interest on a debt security;
- reduce any amounts due on a debt security;
- reduce the amount of principal payable upon acceleration of the maturity of a debt security following a default;
- change the currency of payment on a debt security;
- impair your right to sue for payment;
- modify the subordination provisions, if any, in a manner that is adverse to you;

- reduce the percentage of holders of debt securities whose consent is needed to modify or amend an indenture or to waive compliance with certain provisions of an indenture;
- reduce the percentage of holders of debt securities whose consent is needed to waive past defaults or change certain provisions of the indenture relating to waivers of default; or
- waive a default or event of default in the payment of principal, interest, or premium, if any, on the debt securities.

*Changes Requiring A Majority Vote.* The second type of change is the kind that requires the vote of holders of debt securities owning a majority of the principal amount of the particular series affected. Most changes fall into this category, except for clarifying changes and certain other changes that would not materially adversely affect holders of the debt securities. We require the same vote to obtain a waiver of a past default; however, we cannot obtain a waiver of a payment default or any other aspect of an indenture or the debt securities listed in the first category described above under “— Changes Requiring Your Approval” unless we obtain your individual consent to the waiver.

*Changes Not Requiring Approval.* The third type of change does not require any vote by holders of debt securities. This type is limited to clarifications and certain other changes that would not materially adversely affect holders of the debt securities.

*Further Details Concerning Voting.* Debt securities are not considered outstanding, and therefore the holders of debt securities are not eligible to vote on matters relating thereto, if we have deposited or set aside in trust for such holders money for payment or redemption of debt securities or if we or one of our affiliates own the debt securities. The holders of debt securities are also not eligible to vote if the debt securities have been fully defeased as described below under “— Discharge, Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance — Full Defeasance.”

## **Discharge, Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance**

*Discharge.* We may discharge some obligations to holders of any series of debt securities that either have become due and payable or will become due and payable within one year, or scheduled for redemption within one year, by irrevocably depositing with the trustee, in trust, funds in the applicable currency in an amount sufficient to pay the debt securities, including any premium and interest.

*Full Defeasance.* We can, under particular circumstances, effect a full defeasance of your series of debt securities. By this we mean we can legally release ourselves from any payment or other obligations on the debt securities if, among other things, we put in place the arrangements described below to repay you and deliver certain certificates and opinions to the trustee:

- we must deposit in trust for your benefit and the benefit of all other direct holders of the debt securities a combination of money or U.S. government or U.S. government agency notes or bonds or, in some circumstances, depository receipts representing these notes or bonds, that will generate enough cash to make interest, principal and any other payments on the debt securities on their various due dates;
- under current federal income tax law, the deposit and our legal release from the debt securities would be treated as though we redeemed your debt securities in exchange for your share of the cash and notes or bonds deposited in trust. This treatment would result in sale or exchange treatment of your notes, which would cause you to recognize gain or loss equal to the amount described in “Item 1 — Business — Taxation — U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations — U.S. Federal Income and Estate Taxation of Holders of Our Debt Securities — U.S. Holders — Sale, Exchange or Other Disposition of Notes” included in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K; and
- we must deliver to the trustee a legal opinion confirming the tax law change described above.

If we did accomplish full defeasance, you would have to rely solely on the trust deposit for repayment on the debt securities. You could not look to us for repayment in the unlikely event of any shortfall. Conversely, the trust deposit would most likely be protected from claims of our lenders and other creditors if we ever became bankrupt or insolvent. You would also be released from any subordination provisions.

*Covenant Defeasance.* We can make the same type of deposit described above and be released from some of the restrictive covenants in the debt securities. This is called “covenant defeasance.” In that event, you would lose the protection of those restrictive covenants but would gain the protection of having money and securities set aside in trust to repay the securities and you would be released from any subordination provisions.

If we did accomplish covenant defeasance, the following provisions of an indenture and the debt securities would no longer apply:

- any covenants applicable to the series of debt securities and described in the applicable prospectus supplement;
- any subordination provisions; and
- certain events of default relating to breach of covenants and acceleration of the maturity of other debt set forth in any prospectus supplement.

If we did accomplish covenant defeasance, you could still look to us for repayment of the debt securities if a shortfall in the trust deposit occurred. If one of the remaining events of default occurred, for example, our bankruptcy, and the debt securities became immediately due and payable, there may be a shortfall. Depending on the event causing the default, you may not be able to obtain payment of the shortfall.

### **Subordination**

We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement the terms and conditions, if any, upon which any series of senior subordinated securities or junior subordinated securities is subordinated to debt securities of another series or to our other indebtedness. The terms will include a description of:

- the indebtedness ranking senior to the debt securities being offered;
- the restrictions, if any, on payments to the holders of the debt securities being offered while a default with respect to the senior indebtedness is continuing;
- the restrictions, if any, on payments to the holders of the debt securities being offered following an event of default; and
- provisions requiring holders of the debt securities being offered to remit some payments to holders of senior indebtedness.

### **Guarantees**

Our payment obligations under any series of our debt securities may be guaranteed by some or all of our subsidiaries. The guarantees may be secured or unsecured and may be senior or subordinated obligations. The guarantors will be identified and the terms of the guarantees will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

### **Global Securities**

If so set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may issue the debt securities of a series in whole or in part in the form of one or more global securities that will be deposited with a depository identified in the prospectus supplement. We may issue global securities in either registered or bearer form and in either temporary or permanent form. The specific terms of the depository arrangement with respect to any series of debt securities will be described in the prospectus supplement.

## **DESCRIPTION OF OUR COMMON STOCK**

The following is a summary of certain terms of our common stock. Because this summary is not complete, you should refer to our certificate of incorporation and by-laws, which documents provide additional information regarding our common stock. See also “Description of Certain Provisions of Our Certificate of Incorporation and

By-Laws” below. Copies of our certificate of incorporation and by-laws, as amended, are incorporated by reference as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. This summary is also subject to and qualified by reference to the description of the particular terms of the securities described in the applicable prospectus supplement or any related free writing prospectus.

Common stockholders are entitled to receive dividends when declared by the board of directors and after payment of, or provision for, full cumulative dividends on and any required redemptions of shares of preferred stock then outstanding. Common stockholders have one vote per share, and there are no cumulative voting rights. If we are voluntarily or involuntarily liquidated or dissolved, common stockholders are to share ratably in our distributable assets remaining after the satisfaction of all of our debts and liabilities and the preferred stockholders’ prior preferential rights. Common stockholders do not have preemptive rights. The common stock will be, when issued, fully paid and nonassessable. The common stock is subject to restrictions on transfer under certain circumstances described under “Restrictions on Transfer of Securities” below. The transfer agent for our common stock is Computershare Shareowner Services LLC.

The rights, preferences and privileges of holders of our common stock are subject to, and may be adversely affected by, the rights of the holders of shares of any series of our preferred stock which are outstanding or which we may designate and issue in the future. See “Description of Our Preferred Stock” below.

## **DESCRIPTION OF OUR PREFERRED STOCK**

The following is a summary description of the material terms of our shares of preferred stock. Because it is a summary, it does not contain all of the information that may be important to you. If you want more information, you should read our certificate of incorporation and by-laws, copies of which are incorporated by reference as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. This summary is also subject to and qualified by reference to the description of the particular terms of the securities described in the applicable prospectus supplement or any related free writing prospectus.

### **General**

Our board of directors or a duly authorized committee thereof will determine the designations, preferences, limitations and relative rights of our authorized and unissued preferred stock. These may include:

- the distinctive designation of each series and the number of shares that will constitute the series;
- the voting rights, if any, of shares of the series;
- the distribution rate on the shares of the series, any restriction, limitation or condition upon the payment of the distribution, whether distributions will be cumulative, and the dates on which distributions are payable;
- if the shares are redeemable, the prices at which, and the terms and conditions on which, the shares of the series may be redeemed;
- the purchase or sinking fund provisions, if any, for the purchase or redemption of shares of the series;
- any preferential amount payable upon shares of the series upon our liquidation or the distribution of our assets;
- if the shares are convertible, the price or rates of conversion at which, and the terms and conditions on which, the shares of the series may be converted into other securities; and
- whether the series can be exchanged, at our option, into debt securities, and the terms and conditions of any permitted exchange.

The issuance of shares of preferred stock, or the issuance of rights to purchase shares of preferred stock, could discourage an unsolicited acquisition proposal. In addition, the rights of holders of shares of our common stock will be subject to, and may be adversely affected by, the rights of holders of any shares of preferred stock that we may issue in the future.

The following describes some general terms and provisions of the preferred stock to which a prospectus supplement or a related free writing prospectus may relate. The statements below describing the preferred stock are in all respects subject to and qualified in their entirety by reference to the applicable provisions of our certificate of incorporation, including any applicable certificate of designation, and our by-laws.

The prospectus supplement or any related free writing prospectus will describe the specific terms as to each issuance of shares of preferred stock, including:

- the description of the preferred stock;
- the number of shares of preferred stock offered;
- the offering price of the shares of preferred stock;
- the distribution rate, when distributions will be paid, or the method of determining the distribution rate if it is based on a formula or not otherwise fixed;
- the date from which distributions on the shares of preferred stock shall accumulate;
- the voting rights, if any, of the holders of the shares of preferred stock;
- the provisions for any auctioning or remarketing, if any, of the shares of preferred stock;
- the provision, if any, for redemption or a sinking fund;
- the liquidation preference per share;
- any listing of the shares of preferred stock on a securities exchange;
- whether the shares of preferred stock will be convertible and, if so, the security into which they are convertible and the terms and conditions of conversion, including the conversion price or the manner of determining it;
- whether interests in the shares of preferred stock will be represented by depositary shares as more fully described below under “Description of Depositary Shares;”
- a discussion of federal income tax considerations;
- the relative ranking and preferences of the shares of preferred stock as to distribution and liquidation rights;
- any limitations on issuance of any shares of preferred stock ranking senior to or on a parity with the series of preferred stock being offered as to distribution and liquidation rights;
- any limitations on direct or beneficial ownership and restrictions on transfer, in each case as may be appropriate to preserve our status as a real estate investment trust; and
- any other specific terms, preferences, rights, limitations or restrictions of the shares of preferred stock.

As described under “Description of Depositary Shares,” we may, at our option, elect to offer depositary shares evidenced by depositary receipts. If we elect to do this, each depositary receipt will represent a fractional interest in a share of the particular series of preferred stock issued and deposited with a depositary. The applicable prospectus supplement will specify that fractional interest.

The shares of preferred stock are subject to restrictions on transfer under certain circumstances described under “Restrictions on Transfer of Securities” below.

## **Rank**

Unless our board of directors otherwise determines and we so specify in the applicable prospectus supplement, we expect that the shares of preferred stock will, with respect to distribution rights and rights upon liquidation or dissolution, rank senior to all of our shares of common stock.

**Distributions**

Holders of shares of preferred stock of each series will be entitled to receive cash and/or share distributions at the rates and on the dates shown in the applicable prospectus supplement. Even though the shares of preferred stock may specify a fixed rate of distribution, our board of directors must authorize and declare those distributions and they may be paid only out of assets legally available for payment. We will pay each distribution to holders of record as they appear on our share transfer books on the record dates fixed by our board of directors. In the case of shares of preferred stock represented by depositary receipts, the records of the depositary referred to under “Description of Depositary Shares” will determine the persons to whom dividends are payable.

Distributions on any series of preferred stock may be cumulative or noncumulative, as provided in the applicable prospectus supplement. We refer to each particular series, for ease of reference, as the applicable series. Cumulative distributions will be cumulative from and after the date shown in the applicable prospectus supplement. If our board of directors fails to authorize a distribution on any applicable series that is noncumulative, the holders will have no right to receive, and we will have no obligation to pay, a distribution in respect of the applicable distribution period, whether or not distributions on that series are declared payable in the future. If the applicable series is entitled to a cumulative distribution, we may not declare, or pay or set aside for payment, any full distributions on any other series of preferred stock ranking, as to distributions, on a parity with or junior to the applicable series, unless we declare, and either pay or set aside for payment, full cumulative distributions on the applicable series for all past distribution periods and the then current distribution period. If the applicable series does not have a cumulative distribution, we must declare, and pay or set aside for payment, full distributions for the then current distribution period only. When distributions are not paid, or set aside for payment, in full upon any applicable series and the shares of any other series ranking on a parity as to distributions with the applicable series, we must declare, and pay or set aside for payment, all distributions upon the applicable series and any other parity series proportionately, in accordance with accrued and unpaid distributions of the several series. For these purposes, accrued and unpaid distributions do not include unpaid distribution periods on noncumulative preferred stock. No interest will be payable in respect of any distribution payment that may be in arrears.

Except as provided in the immediately preceding paragraph, unless we declare, and pay or set aside for payment, full cumulative distributions, including for the then current period, on any cumulative applicable series, we may not declare, or pay or set aside for payment, any distributions upon shares of common stock or any other equity securities ranking junior to or on a parity with the applicable series as to distributions or upon liquidation. The foregoing restriction does not apply to distributions paid in shares of common stock or other equity securities ranking junior to the applicable series as to distributions and upon liquidation. If the applicable series is noncumulative, we need only declare, and pay or set aside for payment, the distribution for the then current period, before declaring distributions on shares of common stock or junior or parity securities. In addition, under the circumstances that we could not declare a distribution, we may not redeem, purchase or otherwise acquire for any consideration any shares of common stock or other parity or junior equity securities, except upon conversion into or exchange for shares of common stock or other junior equity securities. We may, however, make purchases and redemptions otherwise prohibited pursuant to certain redemptions or pro rata offers to purchase the outstanding shares of the applicable series and any other parity series of preferred stock.

We will credit any distribution payment made on an applicable series first against the earliest accrued but unpaid distribution due with respect to the series.

**Redemption**

We may have the right or may be required to redeem one or more series of preferred stock, as a whole or in part, in each case upon the terms, if any, and at the times and at the redemption prices shown in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If a series of preferred stock is subject to mandatory redemption, we will specify in the applicable prospectus supplement the number of shares we are required to redeem, when those redemptions start, the redemption price, and any other terms and conditions affecting the redemption. The redemption price will include all accrued and unpaid distributions, except in the case of noncumulative preferred stock. The redemption price may be payable in cash or other property, as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If the redemption price for shares of preferred stock of any series is payable only from the net proceeds of our issuance of shares of capital stock, the terms of the preferred stock may provide that, if no shares of such capital stock shall have been issued or to the extent the net proceeds from any issuance are insufficient to pay in full the aggregate redemption price then due, the shares of preferred stock will automatically and mandatorily be converted into shares of the applicable capital stock pursuant to conversion provisions specified in the applicable prospectus supplement.

### **Liquidation Preference**

The applicable prospectus supplement will show the liquidation preference of the applicable series. Upon our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, before any distribution may be made to the holders of our shares of common stock or any other shares of capital stock ranking junior in the distribution of assets upon any liquidation to the applicable series, the holders of that series will be entitled to receive, out of our assets legally available for distribution to stockholders, liquidating distributions in the amount of the liquidation preference, plus an amount equal to all distributions accrued and unpaid. In the case of a noncumulative applicable series, accrued and unpaid distributions include only the then current distribution period. Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, after payment of the full amount of the liquidating distributions to which they are entitled, the holders of shares of preferred stock will have no right or claim to any of our remaining assets. If liquidating distributions shall have been made in full to all holders of shares of preferred stock, our remaining assets will be distributed among the holders of any other shares of capital stock ranking junior to the shares of preferred stock upon liquidation, according to their rights and preferences and in each case according to their number of shares.

If, upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, our available assets are insufficient to pay the amount of the liquidating distributions on all outstanding shares of that series and the corresponding amounts payable on all shares of capital stock ranking on a parity in the distribution of assets with that series, then the holders of that series and all other equally ranking shares of capital stock shall share ratably in the distribution in proportion to the full liquidating distributions to which they would otherwise be entitled. For these purposes, our consolidation or merger with or into any other corporation or other entity, or the sale, lease or conveyance of all or substantially all of our property or business, shall not be deemed to constitute a liquidation.

### **Voting Rights**

Holders of the shares of preferred stock will not have any voting rights, except as described below or as otherwise from time to time required by law or as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement. As more fully described under “Description of Depositary Shares” below, if we elect to issue depositary shares, each representing a fraction of a share of a series of preferred stock, each holder thereof will in effect be entitled to a fraction of a vote per depositary share.

Unless otherwise provided for in an applicable series, so long as any shares of preferred stock are outstanding, we may not, without the affirmative vote or consent of the holders of a majority of the shares (or such greater vote or consent as is required by the then current rules of any stock exchange or trading market on which we shall have listed the applicable series of preferred stock for trading or as otherwise provided in our organizational documents) of each series of preferred stock outstanding at that time:

- authorize, create or increase the authorized or issued amount of any class or series of shares of capital stock ranking senior to that series of preferred stock with respect to distribution and liquidation rights;
- reclassify any authorized shares of capital stock into a series of shares of capital stock ranking senior to that series of preferred stock with respect to distribution and liquidation rights;
- create, authorize or issue any security or obligation convertible into or evidencing the right to purchase any shares of capital stock ranking senior to that series of preferred stock with respect to distribution and liquidation rights; and
- amend, alter or repeal the provisions of our certificate of incorporation relating to that series of preferred stock that materially and adversely affects the series of preferred stock.

The authorization, creation or increase of the authorized or issued amount of any class or series of shares of capital stock ranking on parity with or junior to a series of preferred stock with respect to distribution and liquidation rights will not be deemed to materially and adversely affect that series.

### **Conversion Rights**

We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement the terms and conditions, if any, upon which you may, or we may require you to, convert shares of any series of preferred stock into shares of common stock or any other class or series of shares of capital stock. The terms will include the number of shares of common stock or other capital stock into which the shares of preferred stock are convertible, the conversion price or manner of determining it, the conversion period, provisions as to whether conversion will be at the option of the holders of the series or at our option, the events requiring an adjustment of the conversion price, and provisions affecting conversion upon the redemption of shares of the series.

### **Our Exchange Rights**

We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement the terms and conditions, if any, upon which we can require you to exchange shares of any series of preferred stock for debt securities. If an exchange is required, you will receive debt securities with a principal amount equal to the liquidation preference of the applicable series of preferred stock. The other terms and provisions of the debt securities will not be materially less favorable to you than those of the series of preferred stock being exchanged.

## **DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES**

This section describes the general terms and provisions of shares of preferred stock represented by depositary shares. The applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus will describe the specific terms of the depositary shares offered through that prospectus supplement and any general terms outlined in this section that will not apply to those depositary shares.

We have summarized in this section certain terms and provisions of the deposit agreement, the depositary shares and the receipts representing depositary shares. The summary is not complete. You should read the forms of deposit agreement and depositary receipt that we will file with the SEC at or before the time of the offering of the depositary shares for additional information before you buy any depositary shares.

### **General**

We may, at our option, elect to offer fractional interests in shares of preferred stock, rather than shares of preferred stock. If we exercise this option, we will appoint a depositary to issue depositary receipts representing those fractional interests. Shares of preferred stock of each series represented by depositary shares will be deposited under a separate deposit agreement between us and the depositary. The prospectus supplement relating to a series of depositary shares will provide the name and address of the depositary. Subject to the terms of the applicable deposit agreement, each owner of depositary shares will be entitled to all of the dividend, voting, conversion, redemption, liquidation and other rights and preferences of the shares of preferred stock represented by those depositary shares.

Depositary receipts issued pursuant to the applicable deposit agreement will evidence ownership of depositary shares. Upon surrender of depositary receipts at the office of the depositary, and upon payment of the charges provided in and subject to the terms of the deposit agreement, a holder of depositary shares will be entitled to receive the shares of preferred stock underlying the surrendered depositary receipts.

### **Distributions**

A depositary will be required to distribute all dividends or other cash distributions received in respect of the applicable shares of preferred stock to the record holders of depositary receipts evidencing the related depositary shares in proportion to the number of depositary receipts owned by the holders. Fractions will be rounded down to the nearest whole cent.

If the distribution is other than in cash, a depositary will be required to distribute property received by it to the record holders of depositary receipts entitled thereto, unless the depositary determines that it is not feasible to make the distribution. In that case, the depositary may, with our approval, sell the property and distribute the net proceeds from the sale to the holders of depositary shares.

Depositary shares that represent shares of preferred stock converted or exchanged will not be entitled to distributions. The deposit agreement also will contain provisions relating to the manner in which any subscription or similar rights we offer to holders of shares of preferred stock will be made available to holders of depositary shares. All distributions will be subject to obligations of holders to file proofs, certificates and other information and to pay certain charges and expenses to the depositary.

### **Withdrawal of Shares of Preferred Stock**

You may receive the number of whole shares of your series of preferred stock and any money or other property represented by your depositary receipts after surrendering your depositary receipts at the corporate trust office of the depositary. Partial shares of preferred stock will not be issued. If the depositary shares that you surrender exceed the number of depositary shares that represent the number of whole shares of preferred stock you wish to withdraw, then the depositary will deliver to you at the same time a new depositary receipt evidencing the excess number of depositary shares. Once you have withdrawn your shares of preferred stock, you will not be entitled to re-deposit those shares of preferred stock under the deposit agreement in order to receive depositary shares. We do not expect that there will be any public trading market for withdrawn shares of preferred stock.

### **Redemption of Depositary Shares**

If we redeem a series of the preferred stock underlying the depositary shares, the depositary will redeem those shares from the proceeds it receives. The redemption price per depositary share will be equal to the applicable fraction of the redemption price per share payable with respect to the series of the preferred stock. The redemption date for depositary shares will be the same as that of the preferred stock. If we are redeeming less than all of the depositary shares, the depositary will select the depositary shares we are redeeming by lot or pro rata as the depositary may determine.

After the date fixed for redemption, the depositary shares called for redemption will no longer be deemed outstanding. All rights of the holders of the depositary shares and the related depositary receipts will cease at that time, except the right to receive the money or other property to which the holders of depositary shares were entitled upon redemption. Receipt of the money or other property is subject to surrender to the depositary of the depositary receipts evidencing the redeemed depositary shares.

### **Voting of the Underlying Shares of Preferred Stock**

Upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of the preferred stock are entitled to vote, a depositary will be required to mail the information contained in the notice of meeting to the record holders of the depositary shares representing such preferred stock. Each record holder of depositary receipts on the record date will be entitled to instruct the depositary as to how the holder's depositary shares will be voted. The record date for the depositary shares will be the same as the record date for the preferred stock. The depositary will vote the shares as you instruct. We will agree to take all reasonable action that the depositary deems necessary in order to enable it to vote the preferred stock in that manner. If you do not instruct the depositary how to vote your shares, the depositary will abstain from voting those shares. The depositary will not be responsible for any failure to carry out any voting instruction, or for the manner or effect of any vote, as long as its action or inaction is in good faith and does not result from its negligence or willful misconduct.

### **Liquidation Preference**

Upon our liquidation, whether voluntary or involuntary, each holder of depositary shares will be entitled to the fraction of the liquidation preference accorded each share of preferred stock represented by the depositary shares, as described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

### **Conversion or Exchange of Shares of Preferred Stock**

The depositary shares will not themselves be convertible into or exchangeable for shares of common stock or preferred stock or any of our other securities or property. Nevertheless, if so specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, the depositary receipts may be surrendered by holders to the applicable depositary with written instructions to it to instruct us to cause the conversion of the preferred stock represented by the depositary shares. Similarly, if so specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may require you to surrender all of your depositary receipts to the applicable depositary upon our requiring the conversion or exchange of the preferred stock represented by the depositary shares into our debt securities. We will agree that, upon receipt of the instruction and any amounts payable in connection with the conversion or exchange, we will cause the conversion or exchange using the same procedures as those provided for delivery of shares of preferred stock to effect the conversion or exchange. If you are converting only a part of the depositary shares, the depositary will issue you a new depositary receipt for any unconverted depositary shares.

### **Amendment and Termination of a Deposit Agreement**

We and the applicable depositary are permitted to amend the provisions of the depositary receipts and the deposit agreement. However, the holders of at least a majority of the applicable depositary shares then outstanding (or such greater approval as is required by the then current rules of any stock exchange or trading market on which we shall have listed the applicable underlying series of preferred stock for trading or as otherwise provided in our organizational documents) must approve any amendment that adds or increases fees or charges or prejudices an important right of holders. Every holder of an outstanding depositary receipt at the time any amendment becomes effective, by continuing to hold the receipt, will be bound by the applicable deposit agreement, as amended.

Any deposit agreement may be terminated by us upon not less than 30 days' prior written notice to the applicable depositary if (1) the termination is necessary to preserve our status as a REIT or (2) a majority of each series of preferred stock affected by the termination consents to the termination. When either event occurs, the depositary will be required to deliver or make available to each holder of depositary receipts, upon surrender of the depositary receipts held by the holder, the number of whole or fractional shares of preferred stock as are represented by the depositary shares evidenced by the depositary receipts, together with any other property held by the depositary with respect to the depositary receipts. In addition, a deposit agreement will automatically terminate if:

- all depositary shares have been redeemed;
- there shall have been a final distribution in respect of the related preferred stock in connection with our liquidation and the distribution has been made to the holders of depositary receipts evidencing the depositary shares underlying the preferred stock; or
- each related share of preferred stock shall have been converted or exchanged into securities not represented by depositary shares.

### **Charges of a Depositary**

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising solely from the existence of a deposit agreement. In addition, we will pay the fees and expenses of a depositary in connection with the initial deposit of the preferred stock and any redemption of preferred stock. However, holders of depositary receipts will pay any transfer or other governmental charges and the fees and expenses of a depositary for any duties the holders request to be performed that are outside of those expressly provided for in the applicable deposit agreement.

### **Resignation and Removal of a Depositary**

A depositary may resign at any time by providing us notice of its election to resign. In addition, we may at any time remove a depositary. Any resignation or removal will take effect when we appoint a successor depositary and it accepts the appointment. We must appoint a successor depositary within 60 days after delivery of the notice of resignation or removal. A depositary must be a bank or trust company that has its principal office in the United States and a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50 million.

## Miscellaneous

A depository will be required to forward to holders of depository receipts any reports and communications from us that it receives with respect to the related shares of preferred stock, including, without limitation, proxy solicitation materials. Holders of depository receipts will be able to inspect the transfer books of the depository and the list of holders of receipts upon reasonable notice. Neither we nor any depository will be liable if either party is prevented from or delayed in performing its obligations under a deposit agreement by law or any circumstances beyond its control. Our obligations and those of the depository under a deposit agreement will be limited to performing duties in good faith and without gross negligence or willful misconduct.

Neither we nor any depository will be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding in respect of any depository receipts, depository shares or related shares of preferred stock unless satisfactory indemnity is furnished. We and each depository will be permitted to rely on written advice of counsel or accountants, on information provided by persons presenting shares of preferred stock for deposit, by holders of depository receipts, or by other persons believed in good faith to be competent to give the information, and on documents believed in good faith to be genuine and signed by a proper party.

If a depository receives conflicting claims, requests or instructions from any holder of depository receipts, on the one hand, and us, on the other hand, the depository shall be entitled to act on the claims, requests or instructions received from us.

## DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

This section describes the general terms and provisions of the warrants. The applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus will describe the specific terms of the warrants offered through that prospectus supplement and any general terms outlined in this section that will not apply to those warrants.

We have summarized in this section certain terms and provisions of the warrant agreement and the warrants. The summary is not complete. You should read the forms of warrant and warrant agreement that we will file with the SEC at or before the time of the offering of the applicable series of warrants for additional information before you buy any warrants.

We may issue, together with any other securities being offered or separately, warrants entitling the holder to purchase from or sell to us, or to receive from us the cash value of the right to purchase or sell, debt securities, preferred stock, depository shares or common stock. We and a warrant agent will enter into a warrant agreement pursuant to which the warrants will be issued. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants.

In the case of each series of warrants, the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus will describe the terms of the warrants being offered thereby. These include the following, if applicable:

- the offering price;
- the number of warrants offered;
- the securities underlying the warrants;
- the exercise price, the procedures for exercise of the warrants and the circumstances, if any, that will cause the warrants to be automatically exercised;
- the date on which the warrants will expire;
- federal income tax consequences;
- the rights, if any, we have to redeem the warrants;
- the name of the warrant agent; and
- the other terms of the warrants.

Warrants may be exercised at the appropriate office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement. Before the exercise of warrants, holders will not have any of the rights of holders of the securities underlying the warrants and will not be entitled to payments made to holders of those securities.

The warrant agreements may be amended or supplemented without the consent of the holders of the warrants to which the amendment or supplement applies to effect changes that are not inconsistent with the provisions of the warrants and that do not adversely affect the interests of the holders of the warrants. However, any amendment that materially and adversely alters the rights of the holders of warrants will not be effective unless the holders of at least a majority of the applicable warrants then outstanding (or such greater approval as is required by the then current rules of any stock exchange or trading market on which we shall have listed the applicable underlying shares of capital stock for trading or as otherwise provided in our organizational documents) approve the amendment. Every holder of an outstanding warrant at the time any amendment becomes effective, by continuing to hold the warrant, will be bound by the applicable warrant agreement, as amended. The prospectus supplement applicable to a particular series of warrants may provide that certain provisions of the warrants, including the securities for which they may be exercisable, the exercise price, and the expiration date, may not be altered without the consent of the holder of each warrant.

### **DESCRIPTION OF UNITS**

We may, from time to time, issue units comprised of one or more of the other securities that may be offered under this prospectus, in any combination. Each unit will be issued so that the holder of the unit is also the holder of each security included in the unit. Thus, the holder of a unit will have the rights and obligations of a holder of each included security. The unit agreement under which a unit is issued may provide that the securities included in the unit may not be held or transferred separately at any time, or at any time before a specified date.

Any applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus will describe:

- the material terms of the units and of the securities comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances those securities may be held or transferred separately;
- any material provisions relating to the issuance, payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units or of the securities comprising the units;
- any special federal income tax considerations applicable to the units; and
- any material provisions of the governing unit agreement that differ from those described above.

### **RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSFER OF SECURITIES**

For us to qualify as a real estate investment trust, not more than 50% in value of our outstanding capital stock may be owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer individuals at any time during the last half of our taxable year. In order to ensure that this requirement is satisfied, our by-laws (with respect to our common stock and preferred stock) and our certificates of designation (for our preferred stock) provide that no person may acquire securities that would result in the direct or indirect beneficial ownership of more than 9.8% of our common stock or more than 9.8% in value of our outstanding capital stock by such person. For purposes of application of such limitations to any person, all options, warrants, convertible securities or other rights to acquire our capital stock held directly or indirectly by such person will be treated as if all such rights had been exercised. If any securities in excess of this limit are issued or transferred to any person, such issuance or transfer shall be valid only with respect to such amount of securities as does not exceed this limit, and such issuance or transfer will be void with respect to the excess. The board of directors may grant limited exemptions from the ownership restrictions set forth in the by-laws to specified persons if the board determines that each such limited exemption is in the best interests of us and our stockholders.

Our by-laws and certificates of designation further provide that, if the foregoing stock ownership limitations are determined to be invalid by virtue of any legal decision, statute, rule or regulation, then the transferee of the shares or other securities will be deemed to have acted as our agent in acquiring the shares or other securities that

are in excess of the limit, and will be deemed to hold such excess shares or securities on our behalf. As the equivalent of treasury securities for such purposes, the excess securities will not be entitled to any voting rights, will not be considered to be outstanding for quorum or voting purposes, and will not be entitled to receive dividends, interest or any other distribution with respect to such securities. Any person who receives dividends, interest or any other distribution in respect of the excess securities will hold the same as our agent and for the transferee of the excess securities following a permitted transfer.

In addition, under our by-laws and certificates of designation, we may refuse to transfer any shares, passing either by voluntary transfer, by operation of law, or under the last will and testament of any stockholder, if such transfer would or might, in the opinion of our board of directors or counsel, disqualify us as a real estate investment trust.

## **DESCRIPTION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF OUR CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION AND BY-LAWS**

### **Anti-Takeover Provisions**

Our certificate of incorporation and by-laws contain provisions that may have the effect of discouraging persons from acquiring large blocks of our stock or delaying or preventing a change in our control. The material provisions that may have such an effect are:

- A provision permitting our board of directors to make, amend or repeal our by-laws.
- Authorization for our board of directors to issue preferred stock in series and to fix the rights and preferences of the series, including, among other things, whether and to what extent the shares of any series will have voting rights and the extent of the preferences of the shares of any series with respect to dividends and other matters (see “Description of Our Preferred Stock” above).
- A prohibition on stockholders taking action by written consent in lieu of a meeting.
- Advance notice procedures with respect to nominations of directors by stockholders and proposals by stockholders of business at an annual meeting.
- The grant only to our board of directors of the right to call special meetings of stockholders.
- Limitations on the number of shares of our capital stock that may be beneficially owned, directly or indirectly, by any one stockholder (see “Restrictions on Transfer of Securities” above).
- Limitations on transactions that involve us and any stockholder who beneficially owns 5% or more of our voting stock (see “— Limitations on Transactions Involving Us and Our Stockholders” below).
- A provision permitting amendment by the stockholders of certain of the provisions listed above only by an affirmative vote of the holders of at least three-quarters of all of the outstanding shares of our voting stock, voting together as a single class.

### **Limitations on Transactions Involving Us and Our Stockholders**

Under our by-laws, in addition to any vote otherwise required by law, our certificate of incorporation or our by-laws, the following transactions will require the affirmative vote of the holders of at least 75% of the voting power of our then outstanding shares of capital stock entitled to vote generally in the election of directors, voting together as a single class:

- Our merger or consolidation with or into
  - any stockholder that owns 5% or more of our voting stock; or
  - any other corporation or entity which is, or after such merger or consolidation would be, an affiliate of a stockholder that owns 5% or more of our voting stock.
- Any sale, lease, exchange, mortgage, pledge, transfer or other disposition of substantially all of our assets, in one transaction or a series of transactions, to or with any stockholder that owns 5% or more of our voting stock or an affiliate of any such stockholder.

- Any reclassification of our securities, including any reverse stock split, or recapitalization or any other transaction that has the effect, directly or indirectly, of increasing the proportionate share of the outstanding shares of any class of our equity securities that is directly or indirectly owned by any stockholder that owns 5% or more of our voting stock or any affiliate of such a stockholder, whether or not the transaction involves such a stockholder.
- The adoption of any plan or proposal for our liquidation or dissolution proposed by or on behalf of a stockholder that owns 5% or more of our voting stock or any affiliate of such a stockholder.

These provisions will not apply to any of the transactions described above if:

- We are at the time of the consummation of the transaction, and at all times throughout the preceding twelve months have been, directly or indirectly, the owner of a majority of each class of the outstanding equity securities of the 5% stockholder that is a party to the transaction; or
- The transaction has been approved by a majority of the members of our board of directors who, at the time such approval is given, were not affiliates or nominees of the 5% stockholder; or
- Both of the following conditions have been met:
  - the aggregate amount of the cash and the fair market value, as determined in good faith by our board of directors, of the consideration other than cash to be received per share by holders of our voting stock in such transaction shall be at least equal to the highest per share price paid by the 5% stockholder for any shares of voting stock acquired by it:
    - within the two-year period immediately prior to the first public announcement of the proposal of the transaction, or
    - in the transaction in which it became a 5% stockholder, whichever is higher; and
  - the consideration to be received by holders of a particular class of outstanding voting stock shall be in cash or in the same form as the 5% stockholder previously paid for shares of such voting stock. If the 5% stockholder paid for shares of any class of voting stock with varying forms of consideration, the form of consideration to be paid by the 5% stockholder for such class of voting stock shall be either cash or the form used to acquire the largest number of shares of such class of voting stock previously acquired by the stockholder.

The foregoing summary of certain provisions of our certificate of incorporation and by-laws does not purport to be complete or to give effect to provisions of statutory or common law. The foregoing summary is subject to, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, the provisions of applicable law and our certificate of incorporation and by-laws, copies of which are incorporated by reference as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

## **PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION**

We may sell the securities:

- through underwriters or dealers;
- through agents;
- directly to purchasers; or
- through a combination of any of these methods of sale.

The applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus will (1) describe the plan of distribution of the securities, (2) describe the terms of the offering and (3) name any managing underwriter or underwriters, underwriter, dealer or agent involved in the offer and sale of the securities.

We also may, from time to time, authorize underwriters and our agents to offer and sell the securities upon the terms and conditions as are set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. In connection with the sale of securities, underwriters may be deemed to have received compensation from us in the form of underwriting

discounts, commissions or fees and may also receive commissions from purchasers of securities for whom they may act as agent. Underwriters may sell securities to or through dealers, and these dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters or commissions from the purchasers for whom they may act as agent, or both. The applicable prospectus supplement will disclose:

- any underwriting compensation we pay to underwriters or agents in connection with the offering of securities; and
- any discounts, concessions or commissions allowed by underwriters to participating dealers.

Under the Securities Act, underwriters, dealers and agents participating in the distribution of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters and any discounts, commissions and fees received by them and any profit realized by them on resale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriting compensation, discounts and commissions. We may agree to indemnify underwriters, dealers and agents against civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, and to make contribution to them in connection with those liabilities.

If indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may also offer and sell securities through one or more firms that will remarket the securities. These firms may act as principals for their own account or as our agents. These firms may be deemed to be underwriters in connection with the securities being remarketed. We may agree to indemnify these firms against liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.

Upon the terms and conditions of the applicable prospectus supplement, the underwriters may purchase and sell securities in the open market. These transactions may include short sales, purchases to cover positions created by short sales and stabilizing transactions. Short sales involve the sale by the underwriters of a greater number of securities than they are required to purchase in the offering. Stabilizing transactions consist of various bids for or purchases of the securities made by the underwriters in the open market prior to the completion of the offering. The underwriters may also impose a penalty bid. This occurs when a particular underwriter repays to the other underwriters a portion of the underwriting discount received by it because the representatives of the underwriters have repurchased securities sold by or for the account of that underwriter in stabilizing or short covering transactions. The underwriters are not required to engage in these activities and may discontinue any of these activities at any time.

If indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may authorize underwriters, agents or dealers to solicit offers by institutions to purchase securities at the offering price set forth in that prospectus supplement under delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on the dates stated in the prospectus supplement. Each contract will be for an amount not less than, and the aggregate principal amount of securities sold under contracts will be not less nor more than, the respective amounts stated in the applicable prospectus supplement. Institutions with whom contracts, when authorized, may be made include commercial and savings banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, educational and charitable institutions, and other institutions but will in all cases be subject to our approval. Contracts will not be subject to any conditions except:

- the purchase by an institution of the securities covered by its contracts will not at the time of delivery be prohibited under the laws of any jurisdiction in the United States to which the institution is subject; and
- if the securities are also being sold to underwriters, we will have sold to them the total principal amount of the securities less the principal amount of the securities covered by contracts.

Underwriters and agents will have no responsibility in respect of the delivery or performance of contracts.

Some of the underwriters and their affiliates may engage in transactions with or perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

Direct sales to investors or our stockholders may be accomplished through subscription offerings or through stockholder purchase rights distributed to stockholders. In connection with subscription offerings or the distribution of stockholder purchase rights to stockholders, if all of the underlying securities are not subscribed for, we may sell any unsubscribed securities to third parties directly or through underwriters or agents. In addition, whether or not all of the underlying securities are subscribed for, we may concurrently offer additional

securities to third parties directly or through underwriters or agents. If securities are to be sold through stockholder purchase rights, the stockholder purchase rights will be distributed as a dividend to the stockholders for which they will pay no separate consideration. The prospectus supplement with respect to the offer of securities under stockholder purchase rights will set forth the relevant terms of the stockholder purchase rights, including:

- whether common stock, preferred stock or some other type of capital stock, or warrants for those securities, will be offered under the stockholder purchase rights;
- the number of those securities or warrants that will be offered under the stockholder purchase rights;
- the period during which and the price at which the stockholder purchase rights will be exercisable;
- the number of stockholder purchase rights then outstanding;
- any provisions for changes to or adjustments in the exercise price of the stockholder purchase rights; and
- any other material terms of the stockholder purchase rights.

Underwriters and our agents may offer and sell the securities at:

- fixed prices, which may be changed;
- prices related to the prevailing market prices at the time of sale; or
- negotiated prices.

#### **LEGAL OPINIONS**

Certain legal matters regarding the securities offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP, Toledo, Ohio. As of May 4, 2012, the attorneys of Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP participating in the preparation of this prospectus, the registration statement and the required legal opinions beneficially held, in the aggregate, approximately 1,688 shares of our common stock and 2,000 shares of our preferred stock. Arnold & Porter LLP will pass upon certain federal income tax matters relating to us. Any underwriters or agents will be represented by their own legal counsel.

#### **EXPERTS**

Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, has audited our consolidated financial statements and schedules included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011, and the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2011, as set forth in their reports, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus and elsewhere in the registration statement. Our financial statements and schedules are incorporated by reference in reliance upon Ernst & Young LLP's reports, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

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**20,000,000 Shares**

HEALTHCARE  REIT

**Common Stock**

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**PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT**

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**UBS Investment Bank  
Deutsche Bank Securities  
Wells Fargo Securities  
Barclays  
Citigroup  
J.P. Morgan  
RBC Capital Markets  
BofA Merrill Lynch  
Credit Agricole CIB  
KeyBanc Capital Markets  
Morgan Stanley  
PNC Capital Markets LLC  
Raymond James  
Stifel  
BB&T Capital Markets  
BNY Mellon Capital Markets, LLC  
Comerica Securities  
Credit Suisse  
The Huntington Investment Company  
RBS  
SMBC Nikko  
SunTrust Robinson Humphrey**

May 8, 2013

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