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Capital Caring is Selected by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to Participate in a New Pilot Program for Hospice-eligible Patients Who Don't Want to Give Up Curative Treatments

Richmond, VA (January 2, 2018) - Capital Caring, the largest and most experienced provider of advanced illness care in the mid-Atlantic region, is pleased to announce that it has been chosen by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to participate in an investigational study called the Medicare Care Choices Model (MCCM).

The Care Choices model is a three-year study designed to explore ways to improve care options for hospice-eligible beneficiaries by allowing greater flexibility and choice in deciding between hospice care and curative treatment, when faced with life-limiting illness.

Capital Caring is piloting the new program in its Richmond office beginning in January 2018.

With the goal of improving Medicare beneficiaries' quality of care and patient and family satisfaction, the Care Choices model will provide a new option for beneficiaries with advanced cancers, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), congestive heart failure, and HIV/AIDS who meet hospice eligibility requirements under the Medicare hospice benefit. Care Choices participants will be able to receive palliative care services from hospice providers participating in the study, while concurrently receiving curative services provided by their own medical providers.

"This is an exciting new program that provides a coordination of care benefit for terminal patients near the end of life, but who are not yet ready to give up on their curative treatments," said Malene Davis, MBA, MSN, RN, CHPN, President and CEO of Capital Caring and West Virginia Caring. "We are honored to be one of the few hospices in the country selected to participate in this pilot program."

Currently, Medicare beneficiaries are required to forgo curative care to receive access to services offered by hospice. The Care Choices model will study whether access to such services will result in improved quality of care and patient and family satisfaction, and whether there are any effects on use of curative services and the Medicare hospice benefit.

“We are delighted that our patients and referring doctors in Richmond will be among the first to have the rare opportunity to participate in this important study,” said Tina Maxson, Executive Director of the Richmond Neighborhood of Capital Caring. “The Care Choices model is a natural fit with Capital Caring’s mission and objectives to provide care coordination earlier for patients along with easier access to hospice care.”

The Care Choices program will initially be rolled out at Capital Caring’s Richmond, VA location and may expand into other Virginia markets.

Hospice-like services provided under the auspices of the Capital Caring’s Care Choices program will include the following elements:

- Care Coordination for safe, effective, and appropriate management of patient care activities, including sharing information with individuals involved in direct patient care;
- Shared decision-making in clinical care activities, tailored to the patient’s values and preferences;
- Nursing-in-home services, 24-7 telephonic support and coordination of care services;
- Social work-assistance in identifying additional community services and resources;
- Assistance with identifying patient, family and caregiver needs in providing social and emotional support services;
- Hospice aide and homemaker-personal care and assistance in maintaining a safe and sanitary environment in areas of the home used by the patient;
- Counseling and Chaplain-bereavement and spiritual services;
- Guidance on nutrition programming;
- Symptom and pain management-in collaboration with the patient’s provider;
- In-home respite care-allows family short-term relief from caregiving responsibilities;
- Volunteers (direct services) provides direct services and social support for the patient and family.

The Care Choices program will run January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2020.

For more information or to enroll a patient, visit www.capitalcaring.org/CareChoices or call 1-800-869-2136.

About Capital Caring: Since 1977, Capital Caring has simply improved care for those facing life-limiting illness through direct support of patients and their families, public education and advocacy. Since its inception, Capital Caring has provided hospice, palliative care, and counseling to nearly 110,000 patients and their families. Almost 800 employees and 1,000 volunteers provide these services to nearly 1,400 patients each day. As one of the nation's oldest and largest non-profit providers of hospice and palliative care, Capital Caring is proud to provide nearly \$3 million in charitable care to families in need annually. To learn more about Capital Caring, **visit www.capitalcaring.org or call 800-869-2136.**