Three Chicagoland Palliative and End of Life Care Organizations Merge to Enhance Patient Care

Horizon, JourneyCare and Midwest join together

Three of Illinois’ leading palliative and end-of-life care providers announced today they have entered into an agreement to merge into one agency which, when fully integrated, will become one of the premier non-profit palliative and end-of-life care providers in the state.

Under the terms of the agreement, Chicago-based Horizon Hospice & Palliative Care, Barrington-based JourneyCare and Glenview-based Midwest Palliative & Hospice CareCenter will operate as a single entity. When combined, the organization will employ more than 800 health care professionals and care for thousands of patients annually in Chicago and 10 surrounding counties.

“We are excited to combine the incredible talent and compassion of three strong organizations, which will expand the breadth and depth of services for patients and their families across a much larger footprint,” said Sarah Bealles, who was selected to become President and CEO of the newly combined agency, moving from her current role as President and CEO of JourneyCare.

“Each of us shares the same vision, which is to provide exceptional care and compassion to our patients and their loved ones. We are honored to be entrusted with their care at this very intimate time in their lives. This will never change,” Bealles shared. “However, by joining together we will be able to integrate our strengths while leveraging our combined infrastructure and expertise. This agreement positions us to take a lead in defining how care is delivered in the transforming health care market,” Bealles added.

The merger will bring together three highly respected community-based organizations which have more than 100 years of combined experience in the fields of palliative medicine and end-of-life care. The new agency’s name is expected to be announced by late summer.

Collectively, the three organizations have five inpatient hospice centers – located in Barrington, Woodstock, Arlington Heights, Glenview and Chicago – and six offices in the greater Chicago area. These facilities will remain fully operational, and the new agency’s corporate functions will be dispersed throughout its existing offices.
With 40 acute-care hospital affiliations and numerous post-acute partnerships, the new organization will care for approximately 2,500 patients daily. All existing partnerships are expected to remain in place, and all employees will be transitioned into roles within the new agency.

The combined organization will be led by a newly elected 18-person board, with six members chosen from each provider’s current board. Following the closing, up to four additional independent voting members may also be chosen from outside of the organizations within a year after closing.

“The health care industry is not standing still and neither can we,” said Jamie O’Malley, CEO of Midwest CareCenter. “As three of Illinois’ founding palliative and end-of-life care providers, we’re moving forward together to continue to take the lead in finding innovative ways to enhance care for the seriously ill.”

“Our announcement today goes a long way toward increasing access to care for a diverse population of people while increasing efficiencies and improving integration and collaboration with all of our health care partners,” said Mary Runge, CEO of Horizon. “We’re proud to be a part of this merger, which truly forms the premier palliative and end-of-life provider in the region.”

Mary Runge, CEO of Horizon, and Jamie O’Malley, CEO of Midwest CareCenter, will remain in active roles through the transition.

“I’m so grateful to have the support of Mary and Jamie as we move forward through this integration,” Bealles said. “Their deep knowledge and passion for providing excellent patient care will be instrumental in making this transition process seamless for our patients, their families and our employees.”

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About Horizon Hospice & Palliative Care
Horizon Hospice & Palliative Care has been a pioneer for end-of-life care, providing comfort and dignity to our patients and their families – regardless of the ability to pay – for 37 years. As the first hospice in Illinois, we are proud of the legacy we’ve built and proud to lead the industry in expert care through innovation, excellence and compassion.

About JourneyCare
As Chicagoland’s largest nonprofit provider of palliative and end-of-life care, JourneyCare has served generations of families in Chicago and the surrounding 10 counties since 1982. Through compassionate and transformative approaches to care, JourneyCare supports over 1,000 patients and families each day in navigating physical, spiritual, social and emotional issues surrounding advanced illness, helping them to live as fully as possible. Founded over three decades ago by a small group of pioneering community volunteers, JourneyCare remains committed to its mission of making every moment count for those touched by serious illness and loss.

About Midwest Palliative & Hospice CareCenter
As one of the first 50 hospices in the U.S., Midwest CareCenter provides palliative medicine and end-of-life care to patients and their families in 150 communities. The organization has a long history as an award-winning innovator in health care, caring for more than 4,000 patients each year. Midwest CareCenter has earned the American Hospital Association Circle of Life Award and has been named a Top 100 Workplace by the Chicago Tribune for the past three years.