



For Immediate Release

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New Hospice for Older Adults Brings Caring Presence to Central Ohio Families

February 15, 2007 COLUMBUS, OH – A unique hospice program that offers comfort and compassion for older adults and their families dealing with physical and emotional pain near life's end is now available in Central Ohio, Linda Artis, RN, Executive Director for Senior Independence today announced. Senior Independence, the premier provider of home and community based services in Ohio, created the hospice program based on its experience serving older adults who wish to remain in their own homes.

"Our commitment, through Senior Independence Hospice, is to enhance the quality of care for seniors and their families through an active, caring presence at life's most difficult of times, giving families more meaningful end-of-life closure with their older loved one," Artis said.

Senior Independence Hospice specializes in geriatric end-of-life issues including heart failure, congestive heart failure, end-stage dementia, Parkinson's Disease, liver, kidney and pulmonary diseases, ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), failure to thrive and cancer.

"By focusing our efforts on creating a holistic, caring, comfortable environment with patient and family involvement, we are providing the means for older adults to live with dignity at the end of life," Artis added. "We are so pleased to be offering this needed service that truly helps families create transitions that give them peace knowing that their loved one's desires and needs are fully understood and met."

Senior Independence has brought together an interdisciplinary hospice team of clinicians who specialize in geriatrics, including a physician, nurses, home health aides, social workers, clergy and volunteers who work closely with the patient and their family to address physical, emotional and spiritual needs. The team is focused on palliative care -- managing the individual's pain and symptoms; assisting the individual with the emotional and psychosocial aspects at life's end; providing needed drugs, medical supplies and equipment; coaching the family on how to care for their older family member offering spiritual care and providing bereavement care and counseling to surviving family and friends.

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Senior Independence will offer hospice care in Central Ohio in varied home settings determined by individual need including assisted living apartments, patients' homes and family members' homes and at hospice centers in the community. It will focus on providing community and professional education topics associated with end-of-life issues including advance care planning, palliative/pain management and age-related illnesses.

Adding hospice completes Senior Independence's continuum of health and supportive services for older Central Ohio residents. Statewide, Senior Independence offers services to nearly 49,000 older adults in 36 Ohio counties and operates 11 adult day centers. Its services include Meals in Motion, transportation, adult day services, certified home health care, non-certified home care, telehealth, community health and wellness clinics and a Web site for family caregivers -- www.icaregiver.org (<http://www.icaregiver.org>).

Senior Independence is a division of Ohio Presbyterian Retirement Services (OPRS), the largest and most experienced not-for-profit provider of continuing care retirement communities and services in Ohio. Senior Independence and OPRS' mission is to provide older adults with caring and quality services toward the enhancement of physical, mental and spiritual well-being consistent with the Christian Gospel.

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Editors' Notes:

Medical Director Named for Senior Independence Hospice -- New Albany resident and 30-year medical professional **Jeffrey Wm. Milks, M.D.** has been named medical director for Senior Independence Hospice. Dr. Milks' areas of expertise include geriatrics and depression. Prior to Dr. Milks' appointment, he served as clinical assistant professor/residency coordinator of geriatric education for The Ohio State University Department of Family Practice, and a staff physician at America's Urgent Care. Dr. Milks also maintains a private practice in geriatrics. He recently accepted a position as Director in the Geriatrics Fellowship at Riverside Methodist Hospitals.

Senior Independence Hospice received a **\$35,000 grant** from the **Harry C. Moores Foundation** in September 2006, to start up the program in Columbus and Central Ohio. Senior Independence Hospice will expand statewide over the next several years.