

Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice and Camarillo Hospice Join Forces To Expand Care for Ventura County Residents

The volunteer boards of Camarillo Hospice and Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice announced on March 13, 2017 that they have signed an agreement to merge these two non-profit organizations and broaden the continuum of care for residents of Ventura County. Camarillo Hospice and Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice have long shared a mission of providing care for people who have serious life threatening or terminal illnesses. By bringing their services together, they are creating a unique community-based health system for end of life care throughout the County.

Founded through a grassroots community effort in 1978, Camarillo Hospice has been a leader in providing volunteers to care for seriously ill and terminal patients and has provided the most comprehensive resource in the County for bereavement support and counseling services. Now celebrating its 70th Anniversary, Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association is at the forefront of innovative Home Health and Medical Hospice Care in Ventura County.

In 1987, Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association developed the first Medicare Certified Home Hospice in the County to provide highly trained professional staff for care at the end of life. In addition, Livingston was the first to bring Medical Palliative Care services into patients' homes in Ventura County. Under this program, patients with serious life threatening illnesses receive both healing and comfort care from an interdisciplinary team of professionals.

Lanyard Dial, M.D., President/CEO and Medical Director of Livingston, sees this merger as a significant move toward creating seamless care across the County. "The motivating force driving this merger comes from a vision of what the future holds for patient needs in our communities as the anticipated changes develop in the health care environment. We are at a transition in the health care system in how care for our most seriously ill patients is being organized. We will now have Medical Hospice and Medical Palliative Care combined with an extensive volunteer base and comprehensive bereavement services all under one roof."

In addition to Medicare reimbursements for the Medical Hospice services, both organizations are supported by foundation grants and donations from individuals and organizations. The merger will combine administrative staff and services to reduce operating expenses and make more resources available for patient needs and the opportunity to expand services.

Laura K. McAvoy, Livingston Board Chair, explained, "Camarillo Hospice and Livingston Hospice are trusted compassionate organizations dedicated to serving all County residents, including the uninsured. The volunteers of Camarillo Hospice will continue to play a vital role in delivering our joint mission of care." She also reported that C. Albert Reeves, MD and Christine Cohen,

both volunteer members of the Board of Directors for Camarillo Hospice, will join Livingston's Board of Directors.

Sandy Nirenberg, President/CEO of Camarillo Hospice shared, "Together, Camarillo Hospice and Livingston Memorial proactively can strengthen the best and most loving care for those in our community who are coping with life-limiting illness and grief."

Kay Wigton, Camarillo Hospice Board Chair, added, "We are so pleased that programs initiated by Camarillo Hospice and developed through the leadership of our retiring President/CEO Sandy Nirenberg will continue to grow and be available to the people of our area. As we move into this new alliance, both Camarillo Hospice and Livingston Hospice remain committed to the vision of a program founded on the hope of making a difference."

The closing of the pending merger is anticipated to be completed sometime in April. In the future Camarillo Hospice will operate as a program of Livingston. For more information on the combined network of hospice services for Ventura County residents, contact Dr. Lanyard Dial at (805) 642-0239.

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