



Contacts: Laurie Henrichsen, Hospice of the Western Reserve, (216) 701-1768,
and Sabrina Bowens, (216) 299-4527
Gabriella Valentine, AHA (202) 626-2264

HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE EARNS NATIONAL HONOR FOR INNOVATIVE PALLIATIVE CARE PROGRAM

Cleveland, Ohio (July 26, 2019) – Western Reserve Navigator (WRN), a home-based palliative care program provided by Hospice of the Western Reserve, was recognized as one of four programs in the U.S. expanding the reach of palliative and end-of-life care in their community. Palliative care focuses on providing relief from symptoms and improving the quality of life for people living with advanced illness. The Circle of Life Award®, now in its 20th year, celebrates innovative organizations and programs across the nation that have made great strides in palliative care. Hospice of the Western Reserve received the award Friday, July 26, at the American Hospital Association’s annual Leadership Summit in San Diego.

“The work of this year’s honorees represents the most innovative and creative thinking in end-of-life care,” said AHA President and CEO Rick Pollack. “Through the use of technology, integrated systems of care and community support, these programs have raised the bar for meeting the needs of patients and their families.”

“Hospice of the Western Reserve is honored to join our hospital colleagues as the only hospice organization in the U.S. to receive a Circle of Life award,” said Bill Finn, President and CEO. “When we innovated the program 17 years ago, it was among the very first of its type in the country. We saw an unmet need within our community to provide support earlier in the disease progression. At-home management of symptoms allows people living with advanced illness to enjoy an improved quality of life, stay more independent and prevent repeated hospitalizations.”

“Our team-based approach is unique in Northern Ohio,” said Joan Hanson, RN, Director of Western Reserve Navigator. “The program utilizes home visits from advanced practice registered nurses and social workers, provides 24/7 phone access to nursing staff and support from trained volunteers between visits to provide spiritual support, companionship and to serve as a ‘second set of eyes and ears’ for the team.”

Patients enrolled in WRN keep their own doctors and can continue to receive curative treatments such as chemo and radiation. The WRN team collaborates with family physicians on an individualized plan of care that provides an extra layer support to address side effects, pain and other symptoms. The social worker can communicate with insurance companies or the VA about benefits, access community services and help patients identify and document their longer-range healthcare wishes.

The Circle of Life Award® honors innovative palliative and end-of-life care in hospices, hospitals, health care systems, long-term care facilities, and other direct care providers. The award seeks to shine a light on programs and organizations that can serve as models or inspiration for other providers.

The 2019 awards are supported, in part, by the California Health Care Foundation, based in Oakland, California and Cambia Health Foundation, based in Portland, Oregon. Major sponsors of the 2019 awards are the American Hospital Association, the Catholic Health Association, and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization & National Hospice Foundation. The awards are cosponsored by The American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine, the Center to Advance Palliative Care, the Hospice & Palliative Nurses Association/the Hospice & Palliative Credentialing Center/the Hospice & Palliative Nurses Foundation, and the National Association of Social Workers.

For more information on the Circle of Life Award®, visit www.aha.org/circleoflife.

###

About the AHA

The AHA is a not-for-profit association of health care provider organizations and individuals that are committed to the improvement of health in their communities. The AHA is the national advocate for its members, which includes nearly 5,000 hospitals, health care systems, networks and other providers of care and 43,000 individual members. Founded in 1898, the AHA provides education for health care leaders and is a source of information on health care issues and trends. For more information visit the Web site at www.aha.org.

About Hospice of the Western Reserve

Celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, Hospice of the Western Reserve provides palliative and end-of-life care, caregiver support and bereavement services throughout Northern Ohio. The nonprofit agency strives to relieve suffering, enhance comfort, promote quality of life, foster choice in end-of-life care and support effective grieving. Care is provided wherever the patient calls home, including private residences, assisted living communities, nursing facilities and hospitals. Three in-patient hospice care units (hospice houses) are available when intensive symptom management is needed, and for the final days.