

## Eli's Hospice Insider

### Mergers & Acquisitions: Hospice Market Activity Brisk Nationwide

#### Another statewide nonprofit alliance is formed.

Cold months have contrasted with a hot hospice market, as these recent deals show:

**In Oregon:** **Care Partners Hospice & Palliative** in Hillsboro, **Hospice of Redmond** in Redmond, **Klamath Hospice and Palliative Care** in Klamath Falls, and **Lumina Hospice and Palliative Care** in Corvallis have formed the **Oregon Nonprofit Hospice Alliance**, the cooperative organization says in a release.

The alliance "will sustain and grow community-based hospice agencies" and aims to "put people above profits," it says. ONHA member services will include "shared efficiencies and economies of scale," as well as "development of programs and outcome measures for payer contracting." Benchmarking and best practices are also part of the network.

"It's really simple: our members provide more care for every dollar spent," adds ONHA Board Chair **Ilene Kleinsorge** in the release. "We don't have profit targets set by a financial executive in another state. Our boards come from the communities we serve and give our agencies the latitude to do what's best to support people through the end-of life process."

ONHA says it patterned its network on **Ohio's Hospice** (see below).

**In Ohio:** **United Church Homes** and **Ohio's Hospice** will launch a non-profit joint venture hospice serving residents of three United Church Home facilities in the Dayton area. Marion-based United Church and Dayton-based Ohio's Hospice aim to expand the program to all the United Church facilities in the state in the future, the hospice network says in a release. "The alliance also creates a platform for **Ohio's Hospice at United Church Homes'** planned future expansion into inpatient and home- and community-based hospice services," the release adds. United Church Homes runs 74 senior living communities in more than 14 states and two Native American nations.

**In New York:** **Good Shepherd Hospice** in Farmingdale has opened a \$5 million inpatient unit at **Mercy Medical Center** in Rockville Centre, according to a release. They are both members of **Catholic Health Services**. **Good Shepherd Hospice Center** has 12 rooms, plus common areas.

**In Pennsylvania:** **Lehigh Valley Health Network** will reopen its "hospice house" in East Stroudsburg that it closed last year, when it moved inpatient hospice services to the hospital. "The community came together and told us we want you to reopen the house. We're willing to support you," a **Lehigh Valley Hospital: Pocono** official said during a press conference, reports TV station WFMZ.

The health system hopes to reopen the facility, the only one in Monroe County, within 90 days.

**In Illinois:** **OSF HealthCare** is expanding hospice services to Champaign-Urbana and Danville, the Peoria-based health system says in a release. OSF, owned by **The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis**, operates in Illinois and Michigan.

**VITAS Healthcare has opened** an inpatient unit in Rockledge, Florida, says spacecoastdaily.com. Its new IPU "accepts 24-hour direct admissions, including weekends and holidays, and offers protocols for complex and high-acuity hospice patients," the news platform adds.

"VITAS currently operates 28 IPUs nationwide, most of which are located within hospital campuses," the site notes. The Miami-based chain operates 47 hospice programs in 14 states.

**Also in Oregon:** **Samaritan Health Services** in Corvallis has handed over its home health business to multi-state chain **Signature Healthcare** based in Wilsonville and its hospice business to **Samaritan Evergreen Hospice** in Albany, reports The Newport News-Times.

A Samaritan Health spokesperson cited declining reimbursement levels as a reason for discontinuing provision of home health and hospice services, according to the News-Times. Meanwhile, **Samaritan Pacific Communities Hospital** in Newport just opened a \$57 million addition.

**In Colorado:** Nonprofit **Banner Health** has acquired **TRU Hospice of Northern Colorado**, which serves Weld County, the Phoenix-based health system says in a release. Banner will assume operations in the next 60 to 90 days.

The sale to the health system that operates in six states won't affect other programs run by **TRU Community Care**, which was founded as **Boulder Hospice** in 1976, the release notes.

**In Texas:** **Traditions Health**, a home health and hospice provider in Texas and California, has acquired **Hospice Connection** with locations in Tyler, Texas, and Longview, Texas, Traditions says in a release. The acquisition will serve as a jumping off point for Traditions to grow its presence in East Texas, the company says.

Traditions Health is a portfolio company of **Dorilton Capital Advisors**.

**In Alabama:** **Encompass Health**, formerly **HealthSouth**, plans to continue its growth strategy in the coming year. So said Compass CEO **Mark Tarr** at the 2019 J.P. Morgan Healthcare Conference on Jan. 8.

Birmingham-based Encompass acquired or opened 22 hospice locations and 23 home health locations in 2018, Tarr noted in a slide presentation. That brings the chain's total to 58 hospice locations and 220 home health locations across 30 states.

**Also in Texas:** Dallas-based **AccentCare Inc.** has acquired **Steward Home Care and Hospice** from **Steward Health System**, which is also headquartered in Dallas, AccentCare says in a release. Steward Home Care and Hospice serves eight counties in Massachusetts and New Hampshire and will continue as the exclusive preferred post-acute provider in Steward Health's care services network. The acquired agency also will participate in Steward Health Choice's accountable care organization (ACO), AccentCare says.

AccentCare now serves 16 states with 10 regional brands.