



CHAPTERS
HEALTHSM
Palliative Care

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chapters Health Palliative Care to work with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida to offer HopeBlue palliative care services

TAMPA – Chapters Health Palliative Care, a service of the non-profit Chapters Health System, has entered into a participating provider agreement with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSF) to provide palliative care services to BCBSF members in Hillsborough County. The program, called HopeBlue, will expand to Polk, Highlands and Hardee counties in early 2012.

Palliative care is a specialized area of healthcare that focuses on addressing the issues associated with a serious illness. Palliative care providers are experts in pain and symptom management and help to add comfort and improve quality of life for their patients.

BCBSF recognizes the significant importance of palliative care services in the overall spectrum of healthcare and has selected Chapters Health Palliative Care for its first collaboration of this kind in the state.

Under the agreement, eligible BCBSF members requiring palliative care services will be referred to Chapters Health Palliative Care for an initial evaluation and assessment in the Palliative Care clinic, a nursing facility, assisted living facility, hospital, or the patient's home.

BCBSF member eligibility for HopeBlue palliative care services is subject to the member's benefit plan coverage.

Chapters Health Palliative Care consists of a team of professionals, including physicians, nurses, social workers and chaplains. The team, under the direction of Medical Director Chad Farmer, M.D., coordinates care with the patient's primary care physician to deliver quality palliative care.

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“We are very excited to work with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida to offer HopeBlue and reach their members who are confronting the challenges of chronic or complex medical conditions,” said Kathy Fernandez, Chapters Health System president/CEO. “Chapters Health has nearly three decades of experience delivering palliative care services, and we are confident that this will be of great benefit to BCBSF members needing this care.”

Palliative care consultations have been shown to produce better patient clinical outcomes, support primary care physicians and increase efficiencies. Since 2006, Chapters Health Palliative Care has provided palliative care consultations at community hospitals and nursing facilities. In 2010, Chapters Health Palliative Care provided more than 850 consultations.

For more information about Chapters Health Palliative Care services or HopeBlue, call 813-871-8200.

About Chapters Health Palliative Care

Chapters Health Palliative Care, a part of Chapters Health System, addresses the needs of those in the community confronting the challenges of chronic or complex medical conditions. The Chapters Health Palliative Care team provides pain management, symptom control, disease education, and supports informed decision making to enhance quality of life for patients and families . For more information, visit www.chaptershealth.org

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