



## CHAPTERS HEALTH® SYSTEM

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



## Chapters Health System Announces the Retirement of President & CEO Kathy L. Fernandez

**TAMPA, FL (October 16, 2017):** Chapters Health System and its affiliates ([Good Shepherd Hospice](#), [HPH Hospice](#) and [LifePath Hospice](#)) announced the retirement of President and Chief Executive Officer Kathy L. Fernandez, BSN, MHA, which will occur on January 4, 2018. Under her visionary leadership, [Chapters Health](#) experienced a significant increase in the number of patients under hospice care as well as expanded programs to address the unique needs related to aging, complex medical conditions and end-of-life concerns. The organization has developed into a premier leader in offering post-acute care to the community it serves, which spans the healthcare continuum from home health to palliative care to hospice care.

“After more than two decades working with Chapters Health and its affiliates, this is an emotional and difficult decision, but the right decision for me at this time in my life. I am looking forward to spending more time with my family, particularly my grandchildren,” said Fernandez. “I am proud of what the organization has accomplished and how it has improved the quality of life and increased the access of care for people affected by advancing age or illness.”

Upon her arrival in 1993 at Hospice of Hillsborough, the total number of patients served was approximately 1,900. With her vision on the future, Fernandez was uncompromising in her mission to provide support and care for people in the community with or affected by advanced illness by offering a wide variety of compassionate healthcare services. Today Chapters Health affiliates serve approximately 17,000 patients and families across eight counties—Citrus, Hardee, Hernando, Hillsborough, Highlands, Pasco, Pinellas and Polk.

The following are some of the major accomplishments in which Fernandez played a key role:

- The organization’s first [Joint Commission](#) accreditation survey and subsequent reaccreditations, followed by accreditations for all hospice and home health affiliates as they joined the system
- Expansion of hospice services into Polk, Highlands and Hardee counties
- Construction of four freestanding hospice houses: Sun City Center Hospice House, Melech Hospice House, Bud & Donna Somers Hospice House and Lakeland Hospice House
- Addition of a hospital-based [palliative care](#) consultation service

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- Affiliation with HPH Hospice and [HPH Home Health](#), which expanded Chapters Health services into Pasco, Hernando and Citrus counties
- Construction of an 8,600-square foot Learning Center featuring a state-of-the-art simulation lab, clinical skills lab and special educational training room
- Creation of an in-house durable medical equipment (DME) program to better serve hospice patients
- Spearheading the opening of the organization’s own pharmacy, which today dispenses more than 162,500 prescriptions per year across the hospice affiliates
- And the transformation of the organization from a hospice company to a multi-level health system addressing issues related to aging and end-of-life care in order to help patients and families make the most of life.

“In 1998, the Board of Directors made a significant and wise decision in naming Kathy Fernandez as the president and CEO,” said Gene Fogarty, Chairman of the Chapters Health Board of Directors. “She grew and expanded the original Hospice of Hillsborough County into the outstanding hospice provider it is today across seven counties as opposed to just one.”

Fernandez started her career in healthcare as an oncology nurse at [University Community Hospital](#) and then as a manager at [H. Lee Moffitt Cancer and Research Institute](#) before joining Hospice of Hillsborough County in 1993 as the director of patient care. Throughout her career, there has been one driving force—the dedication to delivering compassionate healthcare.

“When I officially retire in early 2018, I am looking forward to enjoying the next chapter in my life, knowing that Chapters Health and its affiliates will continue to be a leader in providing choices, education and guidance for those affected by advancing age or advancing illness” Fernandez said.

Chapters Health will name the new CEO in early November.

### ***About Chapters Health System***

Founded in 1983 as a compassionate not-for-profit organization, Chapters Health System provides choices, education and guidance for those affected by advancing age or advancing illness through its managed affiliates: Good Shepherd Hospice, HPH Hospice, LifePath Hospice and Chapters Health Palliative Care, located in Citrus, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Pasco and Polk counties. In addition, Chapters Health operates HPH Home Health, which serves the needs of patients in Pasco and Pinellas counties. Learn more at [www.chaptershealth.org](http://www.chaptershealth.org), like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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