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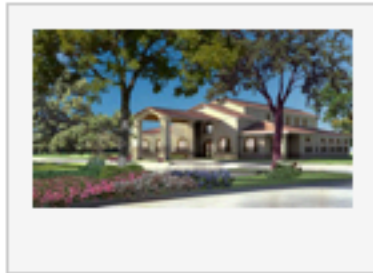
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HOUSTON SOLARI HOSPICE CARE EARNS THE JOINT COMMISSION'S GOLD SEAL OF APPROVAL

by CASSIE M. BURNS

Dec. 27, 2011



After successfully completing a comprehensive on-site evaluation and demonstrating compliance with nationally developed standards for quality care, Houston **Solari Hospice Care's** home care program and newly opened Inpatient Hospice Home at 9714 S. Gessner Road in Houston earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval on Dec. 8.

"We are honored to receive this highly respected certification," says Gary W. Polsky, founder, president and CEO, Solari Hospice Care. "The Joint Commission is widely recognized as a symbol of quality. Getting this stamp of approval demonstrates Solari's compliance with TJC's national standards for providing safe, high quality, cost-effective hospice care and shows our commitment to be continually measured against rigorous standards of performance."

Founded in 1951, The Joint Commission (formerly the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations) is the nation's oldest and largest standards-setting and accrediting body in health care and considered the world leader in evaluating quality and safety of care delivered in all types of healthcare settings.

"Our initial survey was conducted Nov. 29 through Dec. 2 for the purposes of assessing compliance with the Medicare conditions of participation for hospice agencies," says Carole Goins, vice president of clinical operations, Solari Hospice Care. "The staff and processes that are in place have proven that Houston Solari Hospice Care provides safe, high-quality care, treatment and services to our hospice patients and families. The Joint Commission accreditation for Houston Solari Hospice Care further makes a strong statement to the community about our hospice's efforts to provide the highest quality hospice services."

Operated as an independent, not-for-profit organization, The Joint Commission accredits more than 19,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States. TJC standards are developed with input from doctors, nurses, medical directors, providers, subject matter experts, consumers, government agencies and employers.

"Most hospices have the Community Health Accreditation Program (CHAP) as their governing body, which is a great program," says Brenda Hingle, executive director of Houston Solari Hospice Care. "However, in Houston, the hospitals are accredited by The Joint Commission, and so we wanted our program to be measured against those same standards. With this distinction, both physicians and patients alike can have great confidence in our facility and the care we provide."

Officially completed on May 18, 2011, Houston Solari Hospice Care's Medicare-certified, 12-bed freestanding Inpatient Home was specifically designed as a home away from home for hospice patients who require short-term acute care. It is the first facility in Houston to be built – from conception to completion – as a hospice home. As a result, hospice patients have the opportunity to receive professional, comprehensive and compassionate care specific to their unique needs in a state-of-the-art facility that is 100 percent focused on them.

"Our facility is like none other in the Houston area," says Hingle. "It was created with comfort and dignity foremost in its design. From our lush landscaped grounds to the beautifully appointed patient rooms, everything possible has been done to facilitate a tranquil atmosphere."

The 8,000-square-foot building, designed by Houston-based Wilson Architectural Group, has a "Texas/Tuscan feel" with Austin limestone, a rich terra cotta tile roof and numerous high-arched windows to let in warm natural light. The hospice home features private rooms equipped with comfortable beds, loungers for family members, a soothing family gathering room, flat-screen TVs with cable access, a spacious common living room and a serene chapel for spiritual meditation. Other amenities for patients and families include a commercial kitchen, a family laundry facility and wireless Internet access. In addition, the sprawling and well-manicured grounds feature a meditation garden, pergola and conversation areas.

"This facility is a place for people to come to achieve comfort and peace in a crisis, during their illness or when they are eminent," Hingle explains. "We have a wonderful team of compassionate caregivers whose first and only priority is the patients and their families. Our desire is to make all patients under our care – whether they are at home or in our Inpatient Home – as comfortable as possible and to create a warm, friendly atmosphere that facilitates trust. With trust comes rest, comfort and a sense of well-being. Quality of life is the absolute best gift we can give a patient, and that's our foremost goal."