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Hustle or Helpful: The Truth About Hospice Care

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 6th, 2022 — ProPublica and The New Yorker recently published an article, *How Hospice Became a For-Profit Hustle*, outlining multiple instances of fraud and malfeasance targeting the Medicare hospice benefit. The story illustrates how patient care can suffer when lackluster providers are able to manipulate the original intent and purpose of the benefit. Hospice Care of the Lowcountry (HCL) — the lowcountry's community not-for-profit of 40 years — is fighting to change that narrative through their above-and-beyond acts of kindness and service for families facing struggles related to the end-of-life.

HCL's Executive Director, Jenny Brasington, says of the article, "I am saddened by these practices and welcome a much-needed conversation around the common misconceptions of hospice care."

HCL is a community-based, independently owned, non-profit, end-of-life care provider, serving Beaufort County and beyond for 40 years. Unfortunately, there is a growing problem of fraudulent and harmful practices by some providers that give local non-profit hospices like HCL a bad name.

"The activity described in [The New Yorker] piece does not reflect the care we provide or the mission that we've dedicated ourselves to advancing," continues Brasington.

In 2021, HCL provided more than \$175,000 in charity care to support patients who were underinsured or completely uninsured. The non-profit served hundreds of people at the end-of-life with compassionate, honoring, and dignifying care. This care is provided by professional licensed clinicians, who are proud to serve their patients with a fully-personal care plan that fits the patient and their specific needs — All to ensure that each person in the lowcountry has access to proper end-of-life care.

To complete the continuum of care, HCL even launched a brand-new community program called Lowcountry Palliative Care (LPC). This new program focuses on a team approach to patient-centered care, treating symptoms of chronic illness that improve quality of life.

A recent survey by the National Partnership for Healthcare and Hospice Innovation shows that only 31% of people in the United States trust the healthcare system. However, the research also found that hospice stands out as care that patients and their families still wholeheartedly trust and value.

"We know that trust is fragile and earned over time," says Brasington. "Hospice Care of the Lowcountry is committed to maintaining our beloved community's trust through exemplary service to the lowcountry."

To learn more about the organization, connect online at www.hospicecarelc.org.

Hospice Care of the Lowcountry is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 hospice and palliative care organization serving Beaufort and Jasper counties since 1982. Its mission is to give comfort, honor, and dignity for end-of-life patients and their families through compassionate physical, emotional, and spiritual care, regardless of their financial circumstances.