



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pittsfield, MA (January 3, 2012) - *HospiceCare in the Berkshire receives significant increase in state Pediatric Palliative Care contract enabling more support for region's children with life-limiting illnesses.*

HospiceCare in The Berkshires, an affiliate of Berkshire Health Care Systems, has been awarded a contract by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Public Health to provide pediatric palliative services to children with life-limiting illnesses and their families. The award for the 2012 contract year was increased 100% to better serve the children and families in Berkshire County who are facing a life-limiting illness. Denise Granger, Executive Director of HospiceCare stated, "A child's illness impacts the whole family. Through this award our Pediatric Palliative Team can address the needs of the whole family to improve quality of life and support through the course of the illness."

The Massachusetts Pediatric Palliative Care program, as administered in Central and South County by HospiceCare in The Berkshires, is a consultative service available to eligible children under the age of 19 with life-limiting diagnoses. These services are available even when a cure remains a possibility. The program supports the child and family with services designed to achieve an improved quality of life by meeting the physical, emotional and spiritual needs experienced during the course of illness, death and bereavement. Volunteers are a key member of this program and provide a variety of support services.

"The Pediatric Palliative Care program fits with our goals of serving patients and supporting families who are facing a life limiting illness to improve their quality of life. We are honored to further our impact to children and families through this program," Granger said. For further information or to learn how you can volunteer, please contact HospiceCare at 413-443-2994.

Berkshire Healthcare Systems is a midsize healthcare and senior-services company. The largest nonprofit, post acute care company in Massachusetts, it owns or operates 16 rehabilitation and nursing facilities (14 in Massachusetts, one in Ohio, and one in Pennsylvania); Kimball Farms, a lifecare retirement community in Lenox, Massachusetts; and HospiceCare of The Berkshires. For more information, please visit www.berkshirehealthcare.org.