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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**May 30, 2017**

**HEALTH PLAN OF SAN JOAQUIN (HPSJ) PLANS TO ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE  
THROUGHOUT SERIOUS ILLNESS BY OFFERING MEMBERS PALLIATIVE CARE.**

(French Camp, CA) – Health Plan of San Joaquin (HPSJ) is currently working under a planning grant from the California Healthcare Foundation (CHCF) to implement a Palliative Care Program for our HPSJ patients with Congestive Heart Failure, Chronic Pulmonary Disease, Late Stage Cancer and Advanced Liver Disease. The program is “**Care Options**” and will allow patients the option of choosing palliative care in their home, with special services to include visits by a palliative care certified RN/Social Worker and outpatient clinic visits, or telephonic palliative calls in close coordination with the patient’s specialist physician.

“The aim of the program is to assist patients who may have had palliative care started during a hospitalization, but who fall in a gap of continued care on the outpatient side after hospital discharge. This is a problem that HPSJ aims to solve,” said Chief Medical Officer, **Lakshmi Dhanvanthari, MD**. “The program is planned to begin in late summer 2017,” added Dr. Dhanvanthari.

**Palliative Care vs. Hospice Care**

While many confuse them and sometimes even use the terms interchangeably, there are crucial differences between palliative care and hospice care.

**Palliative Care** refers to patient- and family-centered care that optimizes quality of life by anticipating, preventing and treating suffering. Palliative care throughout the continuum of illness involves addressing physical, intellectual, emotional and social, as well as spiritual needs. This kind of care can be provided concurrently with curative care.

**Hospice Care** supports a delivery system geared to patients with limited life expectancy who are in the terminal state of an illness. While assisting patients, and family members, with a limited life expectancy, this care helps patients and family members cope as death nears.

**About HPSJ**

HPSJ, a not-for-profit health plan, has been serving members and the community since 1996. Located in the heart of California’s multicultural Central Valley, HPSJ is the leading Medi-Cal Managed Care

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Page 2 of 2

provider in San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties. HPSJ offers a broad network of providers and works closely with physicians to develop programs and services to ensure quality health care for over 346,000 members.

HPSJ is currently one of only 12 health plans in California with NCQA Accreditation for a managed care Medi-Cal program. Medicaid is known as Medi-Cal in California. Only 160 Medicaid/HMO plans in the U.S. had this NCQA seal at the time of HPSJ's 2015 Accreditation.



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**NCQA Accreditation Seal:** Formats available at –

[http://www.hpsj.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/NCQA\\_accreditation\\_seal\\_HPSJ\\_June.17.2015.zip](http://www.hpsj.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/NCQA_accreditation_seal_HPSJ_June.17.2015.zip)

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