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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE NYS PALLIATIVE CARE INFORMATION ACT (PCIA) IS NOW LAW
What does that mean for New York State residents?

ALBANY, N.Y. - The New York State Palliative Care Information Act (PCIA) which went into effect on February 9th, 2011 calls for attending health care practitioners caring for patients diagnosed with a terminal illness or condition to offer information and counseling regarding palliative care. A term unfamiliar to many, palliative care includes an interdisciplinary team of professionals working together with one's primary care doctor, and in consultation with patients and family members, to provide care options appropriate to the patient, to prevent or relieve pain and suffering and to enhance the patient's quality of life. Palliative care is not a one-size-fits-all approach; patients have a range of diseases and respond differently to treatment options, and the key benefit of palliative care is that it looks at the patient as a whole in order to meet the individual needs of each person and family.

The enactment of the Palliative Care Information Act empowers patients by providing them the opportunity to receive information and counseling about their palliative care options so that they can make informed decisions about their future treatment and care, including hospice care, if appropriate. All New Yorkers diagnosed with a chronic progressive illness should talk with their doctors about palliative care as a health care option; the PCIA has made it easier than ever to begin the conversation.

The Hospice & Palliative Care Organization of New York State (HPCANYS), working with respected physicians and health care providers has developed the 'HPCANYS Palliative Care Information Act Resource Center' to serve as a guide for the treating physician or nurse practitioner as they provide palliative care information and counseling for patients diagnosed with a life limiting

or terminal illness. This resource provides comprehensive answers to key questions such as what the provisions of palliative and/or hospice care actually are, where to find a palliative care provider and what the benefits of palliative care are for the patient, their family and the referring physician. Providers will also find guidance for initiating the conversation with the patient and/or the family. The PCIA resource guide is available online or in a portable media to physicians through HPCANYS and its Hospice and Palliative Care Provider members.

The Hospice and Palliative Care Association of New York State is a not-for-profit organization representing hospice and palliative care programs, allied organizations and individuals that are interested in the development and growth of quality, comprehensive end-of-life services. Founded in 1978 as the New York State Hospice Association, HPCANYS changed its name to Hospice and Palliative Care Association of NYS in 2000 to better reflect its mission of promoting the availability and accessibility of quality hospice and palliative care for all persons in New York State confronted with life-limiting illness. The Association is headquartered in Albany, New York and serves members statewide.

If you would like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Kathy McMahon please contact Carol Mangano at 518 446-1483 or email at cmangano@hpcanys.org.