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Date: 10/9/2012

Title: Hospice Southeastern Connecticut and American Ambulance Team Up to Grant Patients’ Wishes

Photo Captions: (Group photo with ambulance)

Norwich, CT (10/9/2012)

Hospice Southeastern Connecticut and American Ambulance have joined together to grant wishes for hospice patients. The program called Sentimental Journeys, started 13 years ago in Colorado and now operates in 33 states. Originally a spur of the moment idea to grant a dying patient his last wish, Sentimental Journeys has grown into a formal program with specific protocols. Through this program, patients are able to visit people, places and memories one last time.

Greg Allard, Vice President of American Ambulance, serving New London and Windham Counties, approached Hospice Southeastern Connecticut this past spring about the Sentimental Journeys program. They shared the protocols and after working out the details, the program is now up and running. “When I was first approached about this program I immediately knew that I needed to contact Hospice Southeastern Connecticut to see if they were interested in partnering with us” said Greg. “We were very pleased when they accepted our offer.” “The American Ambulance team is honored to be partnered with Hospice SE CT. We’re confident this service we’re providing to people in our community is second to none because of the committed, professional staff of both organizations.”

Patients of Hospice Southeastern Connecticut and their family members can now take a “Sentimental Journey” to any location in eastern Connecticut in one of the American Ambulance carriers with EMT and Paramedic staff attending and providing medical assistance if needed. It all starts when a Hospice Southeastern Connecticut staff member brings a patient’s wish to the agency where they coordinate with American Ambulance to organize the journey. Patients are screened to ensure they are medically appropriate to make the journey and equipment and medication needs are assessed for the trip.

Recently, Mrs. Elizabeth Heebner made the inaugural Sentimental Journey. She took a tour of her favorite places and memories in the Norwich area, ending with a stop for ice cream with her daughter and son-in-
law Cindy and Gary Ambukewicz. “This has been so nice, I saw places I haven’t seen in years” said Mrs. Heebner.

Sentimental Journeys is an important addition to the quality end of life care offered by Hospice Southeastern Connecticut. The patient’s emotional wellbeing is as important to the agency as is their physical state. Patients may not be able to choose when they will die but they can choose how well they will live and the quality of the life they have left.

**About Hospice Southeastern Connecticut**

Hospice Southeastern Connecticut provides care in the home and often in skilled nursing facilities for those approaching the end of their life, regardless of age, disease or inability to pay. The organization also provides bereavement services for families in New London County free of charge, regardless of whether their loved one received hospice care.

Hospice Southeastern Connecticut is a community-based, nonprofit healthcare agency in New London County. It is the only regional hospice affiliated with both Lawrence + Memorial Hospital and The William W. Backus Hospital. It is Medicare/Medicaid certified, state licensed and CHAP accredited. Hospice Southeastern Connecticut has been the hospice of choice for over 9,500 families since 1985.