

**For Immediate Release**

**July 1, 2020**

**Two area health care organizations acquire PACE of the Southern Piedmont, Inc.**



Charlotte, N.C. -- PACE of the Southern Piedmont has two new sponsoring members: Kintegra Health and Lutheran Services Carolinas, two well-established non-profits with strong ties to the area. The change, effective July 1, 2020, was announced by Renee Rizzuti, CEO of PACE of the Southern Piedmont. Participants who receive healthcare services from PACE of the Southern Piedmont will not notice any change in leadership, staffing or operations, since the corporate members primarily affect governance, growth, and strategic planning.

The change in non-profit ownership was driven by the need for local members who have a strong community presence and the ability to grow PACE services in the community. Projections warrant growth from one high-performing PACE Center into two or three PACE centers in the future to serve this largest PACE market in the State of North Carolina.

PACE of the Southern Piedmont, established in 2013, is a non-profit organization that coordinates care for elderly participants covered by Medicare or Medicaid, so they can continue living in a home environment. The organization currently employs approximately 60 full-time clinical and administrative personnel in a service area that includes Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, Stanly and Union Counties. It serves approximately 400 participants in those counties.

PACE is an acronym for "Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly." The program primarily uses Medicare and Medicaid funding to support interdisciplinary care teams who work to ensure that people otherwise eligible for nursing home care can continue living at home. This goal is achieved by providing each participant with ready access to a primary care provider, a care coordinator, and care teams that provide needed services like nursing, dietary assistance, physical or occupational therapy, or transportation for medical appointments.

The program helps to reduce healthcare costs by ensuring that the financial interests of the PACE program and the care needs of the people being served are properly aligned. The PACE approach reduces dependence on hospital-based emergency departments for routine care and postpones the need for full-time care in a nursing home setting.

The program also monitors participants for changes in health status that, if left unattended, could lead to costly acute care episodes. This monitoring is especially helpful for individuals with one or more chronic conditions such as diabetes, dementia or coronary artery disease.

In North Carolina, there are currently 12 PACE programs serving 40 of the state's 100 counties. In addition, 31 of the 50 states have PACE programs, with 263 PACE centers providing member services on a national basis. For more information about NC PACE, visit <https://ncpace.org/>

**Kintegra Health** is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), providing healthcare, health education and preventive care services without regard for the ability to pay. Medical, behavioral health and dental services are offered in Alexander, Catawba, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Gaston, Iredell and Lincoln counties. Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance and self-pay patients are accepted. Kintegra Health is a sponsoring partner of Senior TLC, a PACE program located in Gastonia, NC. For more information about Kintegra Health, visit [www.kintegra.org](http://www.kintegra.org)

“PACE of the Southern Piedmont will add a new dimension to Kintegra Health’s commitment to providing quality health care to individuals in a cost-effective manner,” said Kintegra Health CEO Robert Spencer.

**Lutheran Services Carolinas**, based in Salisbury, North Carolina, is a health and human services organization that operates eight senior care communities around the state, and also offers child and family services in both North and South Carolina. LSC currently partners with three other North Carolina PACE programs: PACE@Home in Hickory, Senior TLC in Gastonia, and PACE of the Triad in Greensboro. For more information about Lutheran Services Carolinas, visit <https://lscarolinas.net/>

“Teaming up with PACE of the Southern Piedmont is a natural fit for Lutheran Services Carolinas because of our long history of serving North Carolina seniors,” said Ted Goins, president of Lutheran Services Carolinas. “We are really looking forward to serving and growing.”

Skip Hislop, chair of PACE’s outgoing governing board, said the board had done extensive due diligence to identify a prospective sponsors that could take the organization to the next level in terms of growth potential and enhanced services.

He praised the four joint venture partners – Cone Health, Advanced Home Care, Well-Spring Retirement Community, and Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region – for their commitment to elder care. He noted, in addition, that the changeover comes at an opportune time for all four partner organizations. “The transition,” he said, “will allow each of us to focus on future strategies better aligned with our core missions and geographical footprints.”

Renee Rizzuti, CEO of PACE of the Southern Piedmont, praised the outgoing board members for their vision in addressing – on a local basis – many of the current issues that top the national healthcare agenda.

“Everyone is looking for better ways to address the healthcare needs of aging baby boomers,” she commented. “It is said that more than 10,000 people a day are now achieving eligibility for Medicare coverage. PACE programs are doing an excellent job of providing needed services to

this segment of the population, and sustaining the quality of those services, while better controlling costs for all involved.”

“It’s a privilege,” she continued, “to be directly involved in the evolution of innovative healthcare models that are more sustainable. Virtually every public policy discussion today includes mention of the costs, quality and availability of healthcare services, particularly those geared to elderly and underserved populations.” PACE of the Southern Piedmont, like its sister organizations nationwide, offers a great example of successful adaptation to meet this challenge.”

Rizzuti said she looks forward to future developments under the stewardship of Kintegra Health and Lutheran Services Carolinas. “I’m especially pleased,” she said, “that our new partners have expressed such a high level of support for our current employees. We have an extraordinary group of people here at PACE of the Southern Piedmont, and it’s reassuring to know that the new sponsors have given our entire team such a strong vote of confidence.”

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**NOTE 1: Renee Rizzuti Background** – Renee Rizzuti is a graduate of the University of Central Florida and has a Master’s Degree in Health Administration (MHA) from UNC-Chapel Hill. She is a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator (LNHA) and a Fellow of the Advisory Board Company of Healthcare Executives (FABC). She serves on the Executive Board Committee for NC PACE Association and Public Policy Committee for National PACE Association. Before joining PACE of the Southern Piedmont, in 2015, she was a Vice President in the Post Acute Care Division of Carolinas HealthCare System (now Atrium Health), where she served for 12 years.

**NOTE 2: Contact Information**

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**NOTE 3: Photos and Logos**

1. Renee Rizzuti, CEO, PACE of the Southern Piedmont
2. PACE of the Southern Piedmont Center in Charlotte, NC
3. PACE Transportation Services
4. PACE Adult Day Health Services
5. PACE Rehabilitation Therapy
6. PACE of the Southern Piedmont Logo

1. Renee Rizzuti, CEO, PACE of the Southern Piedmont



2. PACE of the Southern Piedmont Center, Charlotte, NC



3. PACE Transportation Services



4. PACE Adult Day Health Services



5. PACE Rehabilitation Therapy



6. Logo

