

**MEDICAID MISMANAGEMENT -- RIVER GARDEN HOSTS PRESS CONFERENCE**

*Jacksonville, FL, April 21, 2017* – Leaders of Northeast Florida nursing homes were joined by some 200 residents, families, board members, volunteers and advocates from the area today at a press conference to voice concern over a prospective payment system (PPS) plan that is being considered by the Florida Legislature. There are 52 nursing homes in District 4, which encompasses Northeast Florida. Of these 52 homes, 22 (42%) lose money under the plan in the Senate budget – a total of more than \$7.3 million. This version of a PPS plan negatively affects high-quality area nursing homes by shifting Medicaid dollars from high-quality nursing home communities to primarily lower-quality facilities. Additionally, and most importantly, the proposed Florida Health Care Association (FHCA) plan doesn't contain the first requirement that providers that receive additional funding use any of that money for patient care.

"On average, our facility has a Medicaid census of more than 58 percent, which translates into over 100 nursing home residents. Under the proposed PPS system, River Garden loses \$188,000 – a cost we simply cannot afford and one that would be devastating to our core mission of caring for the frail elderly," said Martin A. Goetz, CEO of River Garden Hebrew Home for the Aged. "Our Legislature must not enact a PPS system until it has been properly constructed and vetted so that corporate profits do not squeeze out patient care. Lawmakers have an obligation to taxpayers to leverage tax dollars in service to people needing care and not corporate greed."

**About River Garden**

River Garden Senior Services is a not-for-profit, mission-driven community agency offering an array of elder care programs and services on a 40-acre campus in the Mandarin area of Jacksonville. Sponsored by the organized Jewish community, River Garden serves clients from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds while maintaining an environment supportive of Jewish identity and informed by Jewish values. In addition to being an 8-time recipient of the prestigious Governor's Gold Seal Award for Excellence in Long Term Care, River Garden is a 5-star rated community by AHCA (Agency for Health Care Administration) and CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) and a recipient of US News & World Report's "Best Nursing Homes" designation in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016-17.

The River Garden campus includes: River Garden Hebrew Home, a 180-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility; The Coves at River Garden, an 80-unit independent living community; River Garden Home Health Care, a Florida licensed and Medicare certified home health agency; River Garden Rehab, providing short-stay rehabilitation and outpatient physical, occupational and speech therapies; River Garden Adult Day Care; The Albert Z. Fleet Geriatric Training Center, providing continuing education, training and professional advancement for staff; and River Garden Foundation, providing financial support to the River Garden system of senior services.

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*L to R:* Josh Ashby, Chair of LeadingAge Florida and CEO, Fleet Landing; Marty Goetz, CEO, River Garden Senior Services; John Capes, CEO, Moosehaven; Sharon Brown, CEO, Cathedral Geriatric Center.