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For Immediate Release

### **Hospice Austin Opens Office in Williamson County**

Hospice Austin is hosting an open house on Thursday, June 14<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. in Georgetown to celebrate the opening of its new branch office, Hospice Austin-Williamson County. The office will serve patients and their families in all of Williamson County, as well as Elgin, Manor, and McDade.

“There’s a lot of small towns in this county where there is no hospice,” said Faye Wright, RN and branch manager of the new office. “Williamson County has a lot of cities, a lot of space. Getting to patients will now be easier and quicker.”

Hospice Austin-Williamson County is staffed with five full-time nurses—all of whom live within the county—as well as two full-time social workers, two chaplains, and six certified nursing assistants. Each patient has a team of a physician, nurse, social worker, chaplain, volunteer, certified nursing assistant, and on-call assistance to care for patients’ and their families’ physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Patients can be cared for in their home, nursing home or assisted living facility, at Hospice Austin’s Christopher House, or in area hospitals such as St. David’s Georgetown, Round Rock Medical Center, John’s Community Hospital or North Austin Medical Center.

Hospice Austin-Williamson County is already caring for 50 patients and expects that number to double by the end of the year. Hospice Austin is one of the oldest and largest hospice programs in Texas and the only hospice in the region operating as a nonprofit organization. This allows resources to be funneled back into programs that directly benefit patients and their families and allows Hospice Austin to provide care for all, regardless of their ability to pay.

Faye Wright, who lives in Liberty Hill, believes that area residents take a lot of pride in the county’s small-town environment and that one of the benefits of a local office is the home-town feeling of having people live in the same community where they work.

Bernie Clifford, an ICU nurse for 23 years who lives in Round Rock, couldn’t agree more. She has no interest in going to Austin, she said, and began working for Hospice Austin in January because of the new Williamson County office. Soon she began seeing

patients in Pflugerville, Round Rock, Georgetown and small towns in between. One of her patients was Hazel Sullivan, a 64-year old Round Rock woman who was under Hospice Austin-Williamson County's care from March 30<sup>th</sup> until May 8<sup>th</sup>. Bernie became close to both Hazel and her daughter, Darlene McClure, with whom Hazel lived.

"I can't tell you how many times Bernie would call and run check on us on her way home from somewhere else," Darlene said. "She was always just as concerned about me—as my mom's caregiver—as she was about my mom. She'd ask me, 'Are you getting enough to eat? Are you getting enough sleep?' And she stayed with us when my mom passed. As a matter of fact, she still calls to check on me."

Fostering that sense of community and support is a primary goal of Hospice Austin in its relationships with its patients and their families, and it's a primary goal of the local office as well.

Everyone is welcome to join Hospice Austin-Williamson County's open house at its new location at 1101 Williams Drive, Suite 102. Hors d'oeuvres and refreshments will be served and the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce will be on hand for the ribbon cutting ceremony at 5:15. For more information about the open house or Hospice Austin-Williamson County services, call (512) 863-8700 or visit [www.hospiceaustin.org](http://www.hospiceaustin.org).

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