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The Ensign Group Acquires Hospice Agencies in Arizona and California

MISSION VIEJO, Calif., Jan. 7, 2013 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- The Ensign Group, Inc. (Nasdaq:ENSG), the parent company of the Ensign™ group of skilled nursing, rehabilitative care services, hospice care, assisted living and urgent care companies, announced today that it has acquired Emblem Hospice, located in Mesa, Arizona, and Vesper Hospice, located in Pasadena, California, from Saint Jude Hospice, a well-regarded hospice operator headquartered in Iowa.

"We are pleased with the measured growth and development of our hospice operations thus far, and this lateral diversification broadens Ensign's service offerings within the continuum of care," said Christopher Christensen, Ensign's President and Chief Executive Officer. "More importantly," he added, "these acquisitions reflect the increasing depth of our long-term commitment to the vibrant Southern California and greater Phoenix healthcare communities where our existing skilled nursing and assisted living operations have been successfully serving for many years."

Effective January 1, 2013, these two agencies will be operated by a subsidiary of Cornerstone Healthcare, Inc., Ensign's home health and hospice-based portfolio subsidiary. "We admire the great work done by the former owners and look forward to working together with an incredible team of caregivers to provide exceptional care to our patients and their families," said Daniel Walker, Cornerstone's President. He added that Ensign expects these newly-acquired agencies to be accretive to earnings in 2013.

The purchases were made with cash and bring Ensign's growing portfolio to 108 healthcare facilities, 86 of which are Ensign-owned, six hospice companies and six home health businesses across 11 states. Ensign affiliates hold purchase options on two of its 22 leased facilities. Mr. Christensen reaffirmed that Ensign is actively seeking additional opportunities to acquire both well-performing and struggling skilled nursing, assisted living and other healthcare related businesses across the United States.

About Ensign(TM)

The Ensign Group, Inc.'s independent operating subsidiaries provide a broad spectrum of skilled nursing and assisted living services, physical, occupational and speech therapies, home health and hospice services, urgent care services and other rehabilitative and healthcare services at 108 facilities, six hospice companies and six home health businesses in California, Arizona, Texas, Washington, Utah, Idaho, Colorado, Nevada, Iowa, Nebraska and Oregon. More information about Ensign is available at <http://www.ensigngroup.net>.

The Ensign Group, Inc. logo is available at <http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=13849>

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