Statement of Collaborative for Palliative Care, Inc.

(Submitted by Mary Beth Morrissey, PhD, President)

The Collaborative for Palliative Care, Inc., New York, (“the Collaborative”) is pleased to submit a statement to the Institute of Medicine National Action Conference. The Collaborative is a consortium of over 40 individual/organizational members, concentrated in the Southern Region of New York State, including health and social services providers, hospitals, hospices, home care agencies, educational institutions, businesses and government agencies who are committed to advancing the goals of increasing equitable access to person-centered, palliative care services, and building community capacities to design palliative care environments. We offer high quality professional education to health care providers, educators and students at no direct cost to them or their organizations. Our Collaborative has provided more than 6 conferences over the past 10 years and educated almost 3000 participants. We feature speakers of national renown who are experts in the field, exploring issues in palliative care nursing and medicine, social work, ethics, public health and interdisciplinary services such as spiritual care, counseling and complementary care, as well as addressing business, legal and financial aspects of health care delivery. We also foster public engagement by providing education to community members and recognizing community leaders who have distinguished themselves through scholarship, industry innovation, research or clinical practice. All of our work is self-funded, relying on financial and in-kind donations from members. (See cpcwestchester.org for more information.)

We are currently engaged in three priority domains of activity, consistent with the recommendations of the IOM Dying in America Report:

- First, we have been successful in designing a highly integrated regional collaborative network through which we convene diverse constituencies, agencies, and industry competitors who share a commitment to the broad public health perspective of advancing the goals of palliative care to relieve pain and suffering (e.g., physical, psychological, social, emotional, spiritual and cultural dimensions), especially among communities of frail elders and other vulnerable populations. We have disseminated this model at local, state and national levels through testimony and publications. Our model was recognized by the American Public Health Association in its 2013 palliative care policy. We also provide mentoring to start-up regional groups through the NYS Palliative Care Collaborative.

- Secondly, we have invested resources in developing successful models of integrated palliative medical and social care provision through the targeted support we provide to our member organizations and in particular, the palliative social work and Area Agency on Aging service communities (Westchester/NYC).
Finally, we have sustained a commitment to research over the ten years we have been in existence, surveying our members about their perceptions of our collaborative process and the priorities they identify for policy advocacy and future education and training. We are currently engaged in the design of an innovative approach to community-based, participatory action research as part of a larger telehealth project of the Westchester Public Private Partnership for Aging Services that includes wrap-around social services. This approach holds promise for better informing future palliative care initiatives and collaborations in the region, and more competently addressing the pragmatic concerns and interests of the communities we serve.

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