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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CareLink and PACE Organization of Rhode Island Reach Growth Milestone

*-- Joan Kwiatkowski, current CEO for both organizations, to join PACE full-time in April --
-- Dr. Christine Gadbois assumes interim Executive Director position for CareLink --*

Providence, RI (March 14, 2019) – CareLink, a nonprofit management organization, and PACE Organization of Rhode Island (PACE), a health plan that helps older adults live independently in the community, today announced they have reached new stages of growth that will require changes to the top post of each organization. Joan Kwiatkowski, who has served as Chief Executive Officer of both companies since their inceptions, will transition to be the full-time CEO of PACE beginning April 1, 2019. Dr. Christine Gadbois, who has a long history of leadership in health and human services in RI, will assume interim leadership duties of Carelink from Kwiatkowski at that time.

“Both CareLink and PACE have been remarkably successful in driving innovations in long-term care and each are preparing for bright futures” said Kevin McKay, Chair of the CareLink Board of Directors. “We are very grateful to Joan for all her efforts to get both organizations to this point and we look forward to working with Christine on the next steps in our journey as a collaborative membership organization.”

CareLink’s partners came together to found and fund PACE-RI in 2004 to help rebalance the long-term care delivery system in the state. The PACE model had proven successful in other parts of the country and CareLink members wanted to help Rhode Island’s medically-complex elders live independently at home for as long as possible.

Part of the original agreement was that Ms. Kwiatkowski would become leader of the new PACE organization, in addition to continuing her CareLink leadership duties. As PACE has grown, it has increasingly needed to pursue its own focused strategy and plan. The company has slowly decoupled itself from CareLink, establishing its own board of directors and most recently, becoming a legally separate entity in December 2016.

Despite the change, the relationship between the two not-for-profit organizations remains strong and PACE will continue to be a member of CareLink, along with 36 other entities.

“PACE’s development and growth is a testament to the vision and cooperation of CareLink’s members,” said Chris Woulfe, current PACE Board Chair and one of the founders of CareLink. “Having a full-time CEO will allow PACE to create and pursue strategic initiatives that support our statewide expansion and contribute to PACE program growth nationwide.”

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About CareLink

Founded in 1997, CareLink is a member-led management services organization working to improve the lives of older adults in Rhode Island through collaboration and innovation. CareLink membership consists of more than 30 community-based, post-acute, and long-term care providers including independent housing, home care, adult day services, PACE, assisted living residences, nursing homes, and hospice care. Collectively, CareLink members provide services to more than 20,000 Rhode Islanders annually. In addition to facilitating member participation in innovative projects, such as a nation-wide Bundled Payments program, CareLink owns and operates Innovations Rehab and Wisdom Tooth Mobile Dental services.

About PACE Organization of Rhode Island

PACE® is a health plan that proactively helps older adults with their health care, so they can remain in the community connected to family and friends. Its full-service health care and coverage serves adults 55 and older who have chronic health needs and want to live at home. PACE® health care and support services include primary care, access to specialists, prescription drugs and durable medical equipment, dental care, 24-hour emergency services, homecare, transportation to all medical appointments, meals, and physical, speech, occupational and respiratory therapies. For more information, visit www.pace-ri.org.