

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Mary Beth Potter, Director of Rice Hospice, 320.231.4613
Pat Berg, Director of Outreach & Community Relations, 320.231.8941
Matthew Fenwick, American Hospital Association, 312.422.2820

Rice Hospice Awarded Circle of Life Citation of Honor

WILLMAR (July 21, 2008) – Rice Hospice today was named a 2008 Circle of Life Award® honoree. Rice Hospice was recognized for its innovative program that improves the care of patients near the end of life or with life-threatening conditions.

The Circle of Life Award celebrates programs across the nation that have made great strides in palliative and end-of-life care. The awards are supported in part by the California Healthcare Foundation, based in Oakland, Calif. Major sponsors include the American Hospital Association, AARP, the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, the Catholic Health Association, the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and the National Hospice Foundation; the Center for Practical Bioethics is a Circle of Life cosponsor.

Rice Hospice, part of Rice Memorial Hospital, is one of nine organizations honored this year by the Circle of Life Award Program. They've been providing hospice services throughout the region – which encompasses 14 counties – for more than 25 years. They've brought comfort to more than 6,000 patients through a dedicated staff and network of more than 600 volunteers. Rice Hospice brings care to the patient's home using a successful outreach program based on partnerships with area communities and their critical access hospitals. In addition, Rice Hospice offers bereavement services to patients' families. They have satellite offices in Appleton, Benson, Dawson, Granite Falls, Montevideo, Ortonville/Graceville, and Paynesville.

Mary Beth Potter, Director of Hospice, will accept the award on behalf of Rice Hospice this week, along with Lawrence Massa, Rice Hospital CEO, Les Erickson, retired Director of Hospice, Evy Hatjstilianos, Volunteer Coordinator, and Brenda Wiese, Grief Center Coordinator. "This honor confirms for the patients we serve that they are receiving the highest level of hospice care available in their own community," said Potter. "Care provided by Rice Hospice allows patients to retain their personal physicians and be hospitalized in their home community if needed. Comprehensive bereavement support is available as well in each community through the services of the Rice Grief Center."

A selection committee made up of leaders from medicine, nursing, social work and health administration, chose Rice Hospice for the Citation of Honor. The committee focused on innovative programs that respect patient goals and preferences, provide comprehensive care,

acknowledge and address the family or caregivers' concerns and needs, and build systems and mechanisms of support to continue the program for future patients and caregivers.

This is the ninth year for the Circle of Life Award. For more information on the Circle of Life Award, visit www.aha.org/circleoflife.

###