

Gilchrist Reaches Highest Level of National Program to Provide Veteran-Centric Hospice Care

HUNT VALLEY, Md., January 3, 2022 – Gilchrist is proud to announce it is now a Level 5 Partner with We Honor Veterans (WHV), a program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. Level 5 is the highest level WHV partners can attain and includes several new required activities and yearly recertification. Gilchrist is joined by only seven other hospices in Maryland and 202 hospices across the country to earn this designation.

As a partner, Gilchrist provides the highest level of specialized care to veterans facing life-limiting illnesses and their families. Aside from existing partner requirements, Level 5 partners demonstrate a commitment to staff education and training to care for Vietnam-era and combat veterans, which now comprise the largest group of veterans served on hospice care.

Additionally, Level 5 requires partners to hold a welcome home ceremony for Vietnam veterans to address the unique spiritual, emotional and social needs of these veterans. Gilchrist hosts an annual welcome home veterans celebration that has attracted thousands of veterans, family members and community members. Finally, as a Level 5 partner, Gilchrist mentors other hospice organizations across the country to improve their care of veterans and their families.

“When we set out to create the Level 5 program, we knew that it had to be different to truly showcase the efforts needed to go above and beyond. Not only have you demonstrated your commitment, but you have helped shape the program and have continued as an example of what all hospice partners should strive to be,” said NHPKO President & CEO Edo Banach.

NHPKO and the Department of Veterans Affairs launched We Honor Veterans in 2010 to address the growing need for veteran-centered care, especially as veterans are aging and need access to palliative and hospice care. Gilchrist has been a partner in this program since it began. Approximately 10 percent of Gilchrist’s hospice patients are veterans.

To support veterans and their families, Gilchrist has a 35-member task force comprised of veteran and non-veteran volunteers and staff. This team helps with Salute to Service tributes, educational programs in schools, veteran to veteran outreach, and celebrations during Veterans Day and Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day. In order to honor, care for and celebrate our Veterans, Gilchrist is privileged to partner with area VVAs, VFWs, Towson/Loyola and Morgan State ROTC cadets, Fort George G. Meade, United States Naval Academy, Marine Barracks and public school systems.

“Gilchrist is honored to be recognized as one of the premier providers of care to veterans and their families,” said Catherine Hamel, President of Gilchrist. “We are deeply committed to continuing our

exemplary service to those who have served and their families. We will not let our military heroes down.”

Learn more about Gilchrist’s We Honor Veterans program at www.gilchristcares.org/whv.

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ABOUT GILCHRIST

Gilchrist is a nationally recognized nonprofit leader in serious illness and end-of-life care. With elder medical care, counseling and hospice, we help people at every stage of serious illness live life to the fullest and make informed choices about their care. Since 1994, the organization has served thousands of individuals throughout Central Maryland—in homes, in skilled nursing and residential care communities, and at our three inpatient hospice centers in Towson, Howard County and Baltimore. Gilchrist is accredited by CHAP (Community Health Accreditation Partner), is a recipient of the Circle of Life award from the American Hospital Association, and is part of GBMC HealthCare, which received the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award in 2020. For more information about Gilchrist, visit www.gilchristcares.org.

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