



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Rick Abbruzzese

410-790-5002

Beth Levine

443-812-4871

Hospice & Palliative Care Network of Maryland Joins RALI Maryland Initiative to Fight Opioid Addiction

*Organization Joins Health, Business Stakeholders to Raise Awareness on Prevention
and Treatment Options*

BALTIMORE, MD. (June 20, 2018) – The Rx Abuse Leadership Initiative (RALI), a diverse alliance of community leaders, health care stakeholders and business representatives, announced today that the Hospice & Palliative Care Network of Maryland, has joined the coalition to help raise awareness about effective prevention and treatment options to address opioid addiction.

“We are so pleased to join this initiative,” Maryland Hospice & Palliative Care Network Executive Director Peggy Funk said. “Our members are often in a position where unused opioids are present and need to be disposed of. New legislation signed by the governor this year is a big step forward for our network, but we can always use more education and awareness with the public. This broad coalition helps bring this all together for us.”

Earlier this year, Governor Larry Hogan signed into law House Bill 407/Senate Bill 232: Public Health – General Hospice Care Programs – Collection and Disposal of Unused Prescription Medication. This new law will help address the disposal of unused prescription medication in home hospice settings by relieving the burden of family members having to worry about unused prescriptions when their loved one has died, and helping to ensure that unused prescriptions, many of which are strong opioids, are not taken by anyone other than the patient for whom they were intended.

RALI Maryland consists of more than a dozen local, state and national organizations that have come together to find solutions to end the opioid crisis in Maryland. The group and its partners will highlight programs that help save lives, mobilize stakeholders to educate and partner with policymakers, provide readily-available informational resources for residents and share the stories of those on the frontlines of the crisis.

RALI Maryland's website, RALImd.org, will serve as a hub for information and resources about the initiative, its featured programs and addiction and substance use disorders.

The Hospice & Palliative Care Network of Maryland is a membership association for hospice and palliative care programs, services, and facilities in the state of Maryland. The organization offers support, resources, training, education and a legislative "voice" to its member organizations. It also serves as a connection point to those in search of their members' services. For more information, visit www.hnmd.org.

In 2016, more than 2,000 Maryland residents lost their lives to drug overdoses – a 59 percent increase in overdose deaths from 2015. Research shows that about 60 percent of people who have abused prescription medications got the drugs from a home medicine cabinet. Maryland has implemented a comprehensive response to the crisis with a series of executive actions and new programs to help residents and community leaders address addiction.

For more information about RALI Maryland, visit RALImd.org.

ABOUT RALI Maryland:

RALI Maryland is an alliance of more than a dozen local, state and national organizations committed to finding solutions to end the opioid crisis in Maryland. Members of the coalition include:

- Cecil County Community Drug Coalition
- Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
- Hospice & Palliative Care Network of Maryland
- Maryland Chamber of Commerce
- Maryland Fraternal Order of Police
- Maryland Pharmacists Association
- Maryland Realtors
- Maryland Rural Health Association
- Maryland State Grange
- MedChi, the Maryland State Medical Society
- National Black Nurses Association
- National Consumers League
- Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America
- Professional Firefighters of Maryland
- Southern Baptist Church
- Veterans Health Council
- Vets Against Drugs
- Vietnam Veterans of America

###