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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Signature HealthCARE: Crucial Clarification of Tennessee Department of Health
Announcement and Skilled Nursing vs. Long-term Care Facility Visitation**

Louisville, KY - February 26, 2021 – Earlier this week, the Tennessee Department of Health announced that state-specific visitation restrictions for long-term care facilities will end effective, Sunday, February 28, 2021. With this announcement, there has been some confusion that is essential to clarify. It is important to understand, the TDH’s announcement does not change the federal visitation guidelines by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for certified Medicare and Medicaid skilled nursing facilities. All Tennessee Signature HealthCARE facilities are CMS certified and must continue to follow the recommended CMS guidelines for in-person visitation. Long-term care facilities, licensed by the state and not certified by CMS, are now encouraged to follow CMS’ visitation guidelines as state visitation restrictions are ending. To further understand the CMS’ visitation guidelines, more information can be found at <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh.pdf>.

It is also important to note, “in-person” visitation under CMS guidelines does not mean *indoor* visitation. “In-person” visitation means being in the presence of your loved one. This can be indoors or outdoors. Our policy for re-opening visitation at our facilities strictly follows the recommended CMS guidelines, which recommends limited *outdoor* visitation whenever practicable, as outdoor visits pose a lower risk of transmission due to increased space and airflow. If outdoor visitation is not feasible for a particular resident’s condition or circumstance, the facility will work to accommodate and support indoor resident visitation based on CMS guidelines. We are diligently working toward the day when we can re-open to limited outdoor visitation!

Concerning outdoor, and especially indoor visitation, there are many factors that must be considered for the utmost care and safety of all. They include but are not limited to, the COVID rates and health of our surrounding communities and counties, and the absence of COVID cases within a facility for several days.

“Rest assured, we all look forward to the day when residents, families, and staff can celebrate seeing our loved ones, in-person,” said Signature Tennessee Operations President, Steve Fleming. “We even look forward to the day when our families can enjoy a long hug! But, as we have always said, we

must reach this goal safely, and with a plan in place that cannot be rushed or compromised, for the safety of all involved.”

Signature HealthCARE understands this has been a challenging time for our families and residents concerning visitation and we look forward to the day when we can re-open to limited outdoor visitation when it is safe for our resident, staff and community. Please monitor your loved one’s specific facility website and Facebook page for more updates related to COVID-19 and visitation re-opening.

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Signature HealthCARE is a family-based healthcare company with integrated services at each point of the continuum of care: skilled nursing, home health, assisted living and in-home care. The company’s organizational culture inspires more than 15,000 employees with three pillars: learning, spirituality, and innovation. A growing number of Signature HealthCARE centers are earning five-star quality ratings, the highest classification from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and 102 Signature HealthCARE locations earned QAPI accreditation. Signature HealthCARE was also awarded the Great Place to Work® award for the past three consecutive years.