**For Immediate Release**

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**KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION OF HEALTH CARE FACILITIES LAUNCHES**

**STATE’S FIRST CENTER FOR ASSISTED LIVING**

*New organization to serve as voice for residents and facilities throughout the Commonwealth*

**Louisville, Ky. (June 27, 2018) –** The Kentucky Association of Health Care Facilities (KAHCF), the state’s leading voice on aging and personal care, launched the Kentucky Center for Assisted Living (KCAL) this week, to serve as the advocacy voice of residents, staff and facilities for this growing community.

The mission of the newly formed KCAL is to represent the ever-growing assisted living community in Kentucky, which currently serves thousands of individuals across the state. KCAL will serve as an advocate for the assisted living community on public policy issues and provide critical education and professional development for residents, families and staff.

KCAL will also work toward ensuring all facilities reach a national quality initiative by 2021. That initiative focuses on four areas: improving employee retention; increasing resident satisfaction; safely reducing hospital readmissions; and reducing unnecessary medication usage.

“We’re thrilled to announce the launch of this new organization, adding a significant new voice to advocate on behalf of Kentucky’s senior care community,” said Betsy Johnson, KAHCF President. “Assisted living is a rapidly growing profession with unique opportunities and challenges. We are fortunate to have three great leaders to help guide the new organization to success. ”

There are currently 200 assisted living communities in Kentucky with 12,500 beds. Assisted living homes and communities offer an alternative to traditional nursing homes for residents who are seeking and are able to live more independently, and who do not require as in-depth regular medical care.

The KAHCF also named KCAL’s three inaugural board members, including Masonic Homes Senior Vice President of Health Services Debra Finneran as chair; The Oaks Assisted Living Executive Director Michael Bowlden as vice-chair, and Management Systems of Kentucky Health Care Director of Operations Joe Jurgensen as secretary.

“The focus of my career has been ensuring seniors receive the highest quality of assisted living care and services. As the new board chair of the KCAL, I look forward to continuing that mission and focusing on this important community,” said Finneran.

* Debra Finneran has been involved with long-term care and senior living communities for over 40 years, and is currently Senior Vice President of Health Services for Masonic Homes of Kentucky. She is a registered nurse and a licensed long-term care administrator who has had an active career in nursing administration roles, ownership and management of nursing and assisted living facilities.
* Michael Bowlden has been involved in the long term care profession for the past 12 years. He currently is a licensed nursing home administrator at The Richwood, a skilled nursing facility, and the Executive Director of The Oaks, an assisted living community, in La Grange, KY.
* Joe Jurgensen is a seasoned professional with years of experience in Kentucky’s personal care homes and assisted living communities. Jurgensen is a chairperson of the Personal Care Home Committee and has worked for Management Systems of Kentucky for over 16 years, serving in many different capacities from facility administrator and executive director to his current position as Director of Operations.

Louisville is widely known as the home of the nations’ aging care community, with several national companies having located headquarters operations in the city. Organizations like KCAL are critical to advancing the profession and fostering innovation that will lead to even better resident care.

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***About The Kentucky Association of Health Care Facilities/Kentucky Center for Assisted Living***

Established in 1954, the Kentucky Association of Health Care Facilities (KAHCF) is the trade association that represents the proprietary and nonproprietary nursing facilities and personal care homes across the Commonwealth. Ketucky Center for Assisted Living (KCAL) was established in 2018. One of the state affiliates of the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living, KAHCF/KCAL provides a wide variety of services to members facilities including legislative and regulatory activities, professional development, statewide recognition programs, publications, media relations, research and advocacy relations.