



## **For Immediate Release**

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## **Backus and Hartford HealthCare to explore affiliation**

**NORWICH** (Feb. 3, 2012) — Backus Corporation and Hartford HealthCare Corporation have jointly announced that they are exploring a formal affiliation of the two healthcare systems.

The two organizations entered into a non-binding Letter of Intent, beginning a process that is expected to take several months. If successful, Backus would become a member of the Hartford HealthCare network, which includes Hartford Hospital, the Hospital of Central Connecticut, MidState Medical Center, Natchaug Hospital, Windham Hospital and a wide spectrum of additional pre- and post-acute health services.

Backus Corporation is the parent of the Backus Healthcare System, which includes The William W. Backus Hospital, Backus Health Care, Inc., Backus Home Health Care, Backus Physician Services, Community Medical Partners, CONNCare, and WWB Corp.

The Backus Board of Directors has been reviewing opportunities for strategic alignment for more than a year, and initiated the process of seeking potential partners. A six-member subcommittee of the 15-member Board researched several proposals in depth, and the full Board voted to explore a formal integration with Hartford HealthCare.

“Backus and Hartford HealthCare have enjoyed a long and beneficial partnership for many years. There is no better example of this than the LIFE STAR program,” said David Whitehead, Backus President and Chief Executive Officer. “I am proud to be associated with such a forward-thinking Board that has chosen to explore this strategic partnership to create a sustainable system of integrated, high-value healthcare for the regional community of eastern Connecticut.”

An affiliation would enable both organizations to share the knowledge and expertise of their staffs and physicians, and give patients easier access to a wider range of services and treatments.

“We believe Backus would be a truly exceptional partner,” said Elliot Joseph, President and Chief Executive Officer of Hartford HealthCare. “It is a highly successful organization with an excellent medical staff, a strong management team, dedicated employees, and a firm commitment to providing high-quality care to the communities it serves. Like the current members of Hartford HealthCare, Backus shares a century-old heritage of community-based care. They share our mission and vision. Coming together, we strengthen our ability to serve the communities of Eastern Connecticut for the next 100 years and beyond.”

As part of the process, both health systems will conduct focus groups with key stakeholders — Backus employees, members of the medical staff, its Corporators, volunteers, government and community leaders, providers of other health and human services and the community-at-large.

“We want to involve all stakeholders in this discussion as we explore affiliation,” Mr. Whitehead said. “This represents a unique opportunity to link strength to strength, and create a stronger health system of coordinated care for eastern Connecticut.”

The signing of a Letter of Intent is the first of several steps before an affiliation can be created. Both organizations will perform due diligence to determine if an affiliation would be in the best interest of patients and communities served by the institutions. If there is agreement to move forward, a Memorandum of Understanding followed by a Definitive Agreement would be created. This final step would require the approval of their respective governing Boards, and regulatory approval by appropriate state and federal agencies.

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**Hartford HealthCare’s members include Hartford Hospital (an 867-bed regional referral center that is one of the largest teaching hospitals and tertiary care centers in New England), a community tertiary hospital and two acute-care community hospitals: The Hospital of Central Connecticut (414 beds, with campuses in New Britain and Southington), MidState Medical Center (144 beds, in Meriden) and Windham Hospital (130 beds, in Willimantic). Other system member providers include two regional behavior health centers, a statewide clinical laboratory operation, a large primary care physician practice group, a large multi-specialty surgical group, a regional home care system, long-term care facilities and a physical therapy and rehabilitation network.**

**The Backus Health System includes The William W. Backus Hospital, a 213-bed acute care hospital that is the only state-licensed Trauma Center east of the Connecticut River; a home healthcare agency; primary care and walk-in urgent care centers in Ledyard, Plainfield, Montville and Colchester; Backus Physician Services, a multi-specialty surgical group; and Community Medical Partners, a medical foundation. Backus is one of two sole members of Hospice Southeastern Connecticut, and has an ownership interest in dialysis centers in the region.**