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LEAP Nursing Home Transition Services Save Ohio Tax-payers \$7 Million; Restore Dignity and Independence to Ohioans with Disabilities

Cleveland, OH- April 18, 2017- Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP), a Northeast Ohio disability services organization, has reached a significant milestone in the area of nursing home transition services, recently facilitating their 300th move of someone with a disability from a nursing home to community-based housing. LEAP estimates that this number of successful transitions has saved Ohio taxpayers an estimated \$7 million in nursing home costs since 2009, based on Ohio Medicaid spending figures.

LEAP began offering nursing home transitions services nearly a decade ago after becoming an Ohio Home Choice service provider. Ohio's HOME Choice program transitions eligible Ohioans from institutional settings to home and community-based settings, where they receive appropriate services and supports at home and in their communities.

Many Ohioans who can live independently in the community may nonetheless end up in nursing homes, often after a traumatic life event such as a stroke, protracted illness, or debilitating accident. Their resulting long hospital and rehabilitation stays can cause the loss of employment, existing housing and support systems, leaving people with no place to turn beyond remaining in a long-term care facility. This in turn places an enormous burden on Ohio tax-payers, with annual nursing home costs reaching \$75,000 per long-term care resident.

The nursing home transition services provided by LEAP reduce these costs, and help to restore greater dignity and independence to persons with disabilities. A successful transition starts with a variety of assessments to determine whether or not someone with a disability can truly thrive in community-based housing. Additional steps include working with the individual and family to search for an appropriate new residence, arranging for needed in-home health and other support services, and furnishing the new housing using a modest, state-provided allowance.

The tremendous effort expended by LEAP staff on behalf of nursing home residents culminates on “moving day”, the long-anticipated time when an individual can finally leave their nursing facility and successfully transition into their community-based home. LEAP services continue for up to a year after move-in, and consist of home visits and additional resource location, depending on each consumer’s unique needs. “LEAP is

committed to standing by each person as they decide for themselves where and how they want to live” said Kelley Clarett, Independent Living Specialist with LEAP. “It’s a very personal and special journey home for each individual.”

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About LEAP

Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP) is an agent of positive change, working to advance participation and equality in society for people with disabilities in Northeast Ohio. Founded more than 35 years ago by people with disabilities, LEAP serves over 1,700 individuals annually, and works to promote social change to enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities. The majority of staff and board members at LEAP are people with disabilities themselves. Through its comprehensive menu of award-winning services, LEAP assists people with disabilities in living independently in their own homes, participating in community life, and finding and maintaining stable employment.