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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **PROVIDER ADVANTAGE AWARDED CONTRACT TO PROVIDE REAL-TIME INSURANCE ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION FOR WATAUGA MEDICAL CENTER**

December 5, 2005 – Beaverton, OR – Provider Advantage NW, Inc., a national provider of automated, integrated real-time healthcare information software, announced today that Watauga Medical Center has selected *VeriLink* to verify healthcare insurance eligibility.

This agreement provides Watauga Medical Center access to real-time patient eligibility and benefit information, allowing easy identification of what the patient's portion will be for services rendered. Watauga Medical Center is a private non-profit corporation established to provide health related services in the High Country Region (Watauga, Ashe, and Avery Counties in North Carolina and Johnson County Tennessee).

Using Provider Advantage's automated, integrated, real-time eligibility verification service, *VeriLink*, Watauga Medical Center will have access to Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial health plan insurance data, to confirm patients' eligibility at the point of service and to determine financial responsibility before the patient is admitted. This will dramatically improve cash flow operations, reduce exposure to uncompensated care, and facilitate the collection of co-pays and deductibles at the time of service, without adding additional work to the registration staff. In addition, verifying eligibility through *VeriLink* will lower administrative costs and increase patient satisfaction.

Provider Advantage's President, Ted Tomkins, shared his enthusiasm for the addition of Watauga Medical Center to Provider Advantage's growing customer base. "We are pleased to see that Watauga Medical Center has identified the importance of automating and integrating insurance eligibility verification at the point-of-service. We are confident that by using *VeriLink*, Watauga Medical Center will obtain complete and accurate patient insurance information before the service is rendered and will be able to optimize reimbursement."

“We are excited about getting a new insurance eligibility verification service that will make our registration staff more efficient and improve the accuracy of the information that they obtain,” said Doug Cody, Patient Financial Services Manager, Watauga Medical Center. “We chose *VeriLink* because of Provider Advantage’s ability to fully integrate their software into our registration process.”

### **About Provider Advantage**

Since 1991, Provider Advantage NW, Inc. has been providing innovative products and services to access real time healthcare data. Provider Advantage develops, markets, installs, and supports electronic data interchange (EDI) technologies that allow organizations to obtain, utilize, and manage insurance data to generate operational efficiencies and improve cash flow. Conforming to the needs of each customer, Provider Advantage’s products and services enable organizations to optimize revenues by establishing responsibility for healthcare services. For more information, contact Provider Advantage NW at (800) 203-5465 or visit [www.provider-advantage.com](http://www.provider-advantage.com).

### **About Watauga Medical Center**

Watauga Medical Center is a private non-profit corporation established to provide health related services in the High Country Region (Watauga, Ashe, and Avery Counties in North Carolina and Johnson County Tennessee). The regional referral medical complex offers both primary and secondary acute and specialty care.

The medical center is made up of the hospital; The Seby B. Jones Regional Cancer Center which provides both radiation and chemotherapy on an out-patient basis; The Paul H. Broyhill Wellness and Rehabilitation Center offering wellness activities and out-patient rehabilitation; The Scott Mallard Kidney Dialysis Center which provides end stage renal dialysis on an out-patient and in-patient basis; Medical Center Home Health which provides a full range of home care services; Blue Ridge Physical Therapy which provides out patient and sports related physical therapy; and the Watauga Medical Center Foundation which provides a structured means for donors to express their gratitude by making gifts for services and programs of the medical center. For more information, contact Watauga Medical Center at (800) 443-7385 or [www.wataugamc.org](http://www.wataugamc.org).