



# NEWS RELEASE

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## The Hartford Enhances Group Life Insurance Coverage By Expediting Payment Of Death Benefits

*Innovative life insurance program sets new industry standard while addressing the significant financial hardships that funeral expenses can cause*

SIMSBURY, Conn., June 28, 2010 – Paying for an unexpected funeral would be a financial hardship for two out of three Americans, according to a recent national survey<sup>1</sup> by The Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: HIG). To help consumers during one of the stressful points in their lives, The Hartford today is launching [Life Conversations](#) Express Pay, a new program that accelerates payment of death benefits for consumers protected by group life insurance policies.

Beneficiaries who use [Everest Funeral Planning](#),<sup>2</sup> a service available to consumers who obtain The Hartford's group life insurance through their employers, can receive death benefits in as little as 48 hours from the date of death. In this innovative new process, The Hartford will accept a certificate of death from a funeral home in lieu of a traditional death certificate, which speeds up the payment of death benefits by several weeks.

“Consumers have told us that they need [life insurance](#) to pay for funeral expenses. However, many people don't realize that the traditional payment of death benefits could take a month or longer. We developed a simple but innovative program that combines our quality life insurance products and service with Everest's expertise to deliver real value to consumers,” said Ron Gendreau, executive vice president of The Hartford's Group Benefits Division. “In this tough economy, The Hartford is doing what it can to help consumers maximize their benefits. We've updated our group life insurance so that Americans get help when they need it most.”

The Hartford's research shows that most people estimate the average cost of a funeral is \$8,800. Nearly half of those surveyed (46 percent) said they anticipate using life insurance to pay for an unexpected funeral, and 42 percent said they would use personal savings.

The new expedited death benefits payment process is offered through [The Hartford's Life Conversations](#), a comprehensive suite of end-of-life resources that includes [funeral planning](#), [will preparation](#), estate planning, as well as emotional, financial, and legal [support services](#) to beneficiaries. Operating out of a call center that is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week,

## 2 - The Hartford's Life Conversations Express Pay

Everest's trained advisors take beneficiaries through the [process of planning a funeral](#) and [filing a life insurance claim](#), including the availability of Life Conversations Express Pay.

The death benefit can be expedited in instances where the insured died from natural causes, such as an illness, and the cause of death does not need to be investigated. At the beneficiary's request, the death benefit proceeds can be placed into a [Safe Haven account](#)<sup>3</sup> created for the beneficiary, and then a draftbook (similar to a checkbook) is mailed overnight to allow immediate access to funds.

"In a pilot of our new death benefits payment program, consumers told us that they valued our fast turnaround. They said we saved them time, money and stress, and that without our help they would have a difficult time financially," said Gendreau.

Everest's funeral planning offers consumers and their families the resources, information and assistance they need in order to make informed decisions about the funeral process. Everest's advisors can negotiate funeral costs on behalf of the bereaved which can result in \$1,250 to \$5,500 in savings per funeral, based on the average saving realized by Everest consumers.

"We are pleased to partner with a true innovator and industry leader," said Mark Duffey, president and chief executive officer of Everest. "Together with The Hartford, we are ready to help ease both the emotional and financial burden of losing a loved one."

Additionally, The Hartford's survey found:

- 53 percent of consumers have obtained life insurance
- 36 percent have not started end-of-life planning
- 27 percent have prepared a will
- 20 percent have created a living will
- 5 percent have made funeral plans/arrangements.

"Our research indicates consumers continue to need assistance with end-of-life planning. In the year since we successfully launched Life Conversations with Everest, we've listened closely to employers and their employees," Gendreau said. "Based on their feedback, we've designed our group life insurance product and services to help alleviate worry and complexity at a difficult moment in a person's life."

### **About The Hartford**

Celebrating 200 years of helping its customers achieve what's ahead, The Hartford (NYSE: HIG) is an insurance and wealth management company. Through its unique focus on customer needs, the company serves businesses and consumers by providing the products and solutions they need to protect their assets and income from risks and manage their wealth and retirement needs. A Fortune 100 company, The Hartford is recognized widely for its service expertise and as one of the world's most ethical companies. More information on the company and its financial performance is available at [www.thehartford.com](http://www.thehartford.com).

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### 3 - The Hartford's Life Conversations Express Pay

Some of the statements in this release may be considered forward-looking statements as defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. We caution investors that these forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance, and actual results may differ materially. Investors should consider the important risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results to differ. These important risks and uncertainties include those discussed in our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, our 2009 Annual Report on Form 10-K and the other filings we make with the Securities and Exchange Commission. We assume no obligation to update this release, which speaks as of the date issued.

1. An independent market research agency conducted an online survey polling more than 1,000 U.S. adults, aged 18-64, in March 2010. The survey has a margin of error of 2 to 3 percent.
2. Funeral Concierge Services are offered through Everest Funeral Package, LLC (Everest). Everest is not affiliated with The Hartford and is not a provider of insurance services. Everest and its affiliates have no affiliation with Everest Re Group, Ltd., Everest Reinsurance Company or any of their affiliates.
3. The Hartford's Safe Haven Program provides a secure place for beneficiaries to keep life or accidental death claim(s) of \$10,000 or more. For more information, visit [www.hartfordlifeconversations.com](http://www.hartfordlifeconversations.com).