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***Home Health Care Agencies to Join Forces
In Southern Maine***

Saco, Maine -- Two leading non-profit home health care agencies, Southern Maine Medical Center (SMMC) Visiting Nurses and HomeHealth Visiting Nurses, have announced their intention to join their operations effective December 1, 2011. Both agencies are members of MaineHealth serving York County patients.

The merger of these two award-winning agencies will yield the most expansive and comprehensive home health care available in Southern Maine. The resulting agency will carry the name of HomeHealth Visiting Nurses with headquarters in Saco and office locations in Kennebunk, Biddeford, Sanford, Bridgton and Portland and provide services throughout York, Cumberland and southern Oxford Counties.

Patients currently being cared for by clinicians of either agency will continue to receive care without interruption.

“SMMC Visiting Nurses and HomeHealth Visiting Nurses are sister agencies who share the same mission. We are all fully committed to meeting the home health care needs of York County patients and their referring physicians. By joining forces we are creating a dynamic agency that will best be able to support our patients’ ever increasing healthcare needs now and in the future,” said Elaine Brady, executive director of SMMC Visiting Nurses.

Both agencies have evolved over the past century to meet the needs of the Southern Maine community and are recognized as preferred providers of home and community health services. In 2010, the two agencies provided home health care to over 14,500 patients and vaccinated 30,000 school children and adults during the H1N1 Flu Pandemic. Their non-profit mission is supported by committed trustees, foundation and donor support and more than 200 volunteers.

According to Maryanna Arsenault, President and CEO of HomeHealth Visiting Nurses, “we are thrilled to combine forces with SMMC Visiting Nurses. This partnership brings together clinical experts, the latest in technologies, and efficiency gains that will enhance

patient care. We are confident that this planned merger will strengthen and expand access to home health care throughout Southern Maine.”

“Elaine Brady has been a leader in home health care for over 30 years now,” noted Ed McGeachey, President and CEO of Southern Maine Medical Center. “When she announced her retirement a few months ago, she and the SMMC Visiting Nurse board leadership began planning for her succession. Elaine, with the support of her board, determined that the timing was right to bring these two great agencies together, and the boards of Southern Maine Medical Center, HomeHealth Visiting Nurses, and MaineHealth all agreed. The complexities of administering home health care are enormous. This merger will ensure that patients will be cared for by the same wonderful home health nurses and receive the same excellent care they have always received, while the administrative responsibilities are centralized for greater efficiencies. It makes perfect sense.”

SMMC Visiting Nurses has 60 employees, and HomeHealth Visiting Nurses employs 236. The merger will result in no job losses. Throughout the transition and merger, patients will receive the same full range of services currently provided by professionally trained and experienced nurses, therapists, home health aides and social workers. Three SMMC Visiting Nurse board members will serve 4 year terms on the HomeHealth Visiting Nurses board. Thereafter, at least one HomeHealth Visiting Nurses board member will be a Kennebunk resident, reflecting SMMC Visiting Nurses’ century of roots in that community.

The new agency will operate as a licensed 501(c)3 not-for-profit provider of home health care. Services will be provided to people of all ages, regardless of income, and will include skilled nursing, rehabilitative therapies, social work, home health aides, and telehealth, as well as an extensive community health and wellness program. The merger will become effective December 1, 2011, pending final state approvals. Patients and healthcare professionals can continue to contact HomeHealth Visiting Nurses at 1-800-660-4867 and SMMC Visiting Nurses 207-985-1000 until the merger becomes final. For additional updates, go to www.homehealth.org or www.smmcvisitingnurses.org

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