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NEWS RELEASE

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VNA Wound Specialists Visit Patients Without Leaving the Office

Omaha, NE – April 1, 2008 – Wound specialist can now visit their patients without ever leaving the home or office. Through a new program provided by the Visiting Nurse Association (VNA), visiting home health nurses take photos of their patients' wounds and enter assessment information into the agency's database. Wound specialists can then view the wound images and other wound assessment data by logging onto the VNA's database and viewing the patient's electronic medical record from the office or home.

"We decided to invest in this inexpensive technology so that we can give expert and consistent wound care to our patients," said James Summerfelt, President and CEO of VNA. Summerfelt continues, "The program also allows us to provide wound care according to evidence-based standards. This decreases the rate of home care wound infections, as well as the cost of wound care, thereby providing positive outcomes for our patients and the VNA."

Summerfelt said that the VNA uses a mix of in-home nursing visits and wound specialist consulting time to extend the amount of nurse attention to their patients. The visiting home health nurse takes wound photos using digital cameras, uploading the images into his/her laptop computer. The nurse then transfers them to the agency database where the wound specialist can compare the images to the last or first visit and ensure the patient's wound continues to heal.

After reviewing the wound images and other aspects of the patient's electronic record, he/she communicates with the patient's Home Health Care Manager and physician regarding any recommended changes in care. Summary reports, including wound images are available for physicians, wound care centers and insurance payors.

"We know it's going to make a big difference in the effectiveness of our care and the satisfaction of our patients!" Summerfelt said.

About the VNA

Established in 1896, the VNA provides home care, IV therapy, hospice, and community health services. VNA staff visits clients in a variety of settings - homes, nursing care facilities, community centers, and homeless shelters. For more than 100 years, VNA remains true to its mission: to foster the dignity and well being of the residents of our community by delivering the highest quality home and community based health care services that provide peace of mind, quality of life, and independence.

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