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NEWS RELEASE

VON READY WITH PANDEMIC PLAN – ENSURING CLIENT CARE IS TOP PRIORITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 18, 2006 (Ottawa, ON) — VON (Victorian Order of Nurses) has spent the last 13 months creating a comprehensive pandemic plan that mirrors the Canadian Pandemic Plan and Provincial Pandemic Plans.

“This plan will ensure that our dedicated staff and volunteers are able to continue to provide high quality home and community care in the face of a possible pandemic or emergency,” says Dr. Judith Shamian, VON President and CEO.

VON has identified essential services to ensure priority needs are met, is providing cross training to accommodate the illness of employees and volunteers and updating client contingency plans to ensure care and service is uninterrupted. VON will continue to provide efficient and effective communication, both internally and externally so that staff, volunteers, clients and their families are well informed and well equipped to handle a possible pandemic or emergency.

Constructed by the VON Disaster and Emergency Workgroup, the plan is an integrated effort that marks the first step towards a national communication and network system in preparedness for the next potential pandemic. Drills, exercises and integration into local public health pandemic plans across Canada will be completed by the end of December to ensure organizational readiness.

A series of educational sessions, composed of three parts: The VON Pandemic Plan, Understanding Pandemic Flu and How to Prepare and the Ethics Component of Pandemic were conducted for the entire organization. Dispelling myths, heightening awareness, confirming thoughts and feelings and encouraging consistent messaging with the train-the-trainer concept proved to be valuable learning.

VON is dedicated to being a leader in the delivery of innovative comprehensive health and social services and to influencing the development of health and social policy in Canada. We are a national health organization and registered charity offering a wide range of community health care solutions that meet the needs of Canadians from coast to coast. VON is committed to quality improvement and is accredited by the Canadian Council of Health Services Accreditation.

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