

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mayor Menino Proclaims September 7, 2011 to be Visiting Nurse Association of Boston & Affiliates Day!



BOSTON, MA – To commemorate the agency’s 125th anniversary as the first and oldest visiting nurse organization in the nation, Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino proclaimed September 7, 2011 to be Visiting Nurse Association of Boston & Affiliates Day. Mayor Menino made this proclamation at Boston’s City Hall in front of a crowd of VNA of Boston employees, board members and distinguished guests including Dr. JudyAnn Bigby, Secretary of Health and Human Services and Emily Shea, Boston’s Commissioner of Elderly Affairs.

“Helping people. That’s what the government should be doing, but it’s something the VNA of Boston is doing every day,” said Menino. “What began 125 years ago as a charitable organization, dedicated to caring for the poor and newly emigrated, is now an advocate, raising the importance of public health and equal access to care. Ensuring comprehensive care to the most vulnerable citizens is a cornerstone of their mission and we are grateful for all they do to keep Boston healthy.”



Dr. JudyAnn Bigby, Secretary of Health and Human Services for the Commonwealth and long time friend and supporter of the organization said, “Health care has changed, but needs have not. While more than 98% of Massachusetts residents have health insurance, access to health care still remains a struggle. The revolving door of emergency care costs an incredible amount of money and leads to significantly lower quality care. The VNA of Boston can play a key part in reducing health care costs by keeping people healthy and at home.” Emily Shea, Commissioner of Elderly Affairs for the City of Boston

concluded the ceremony by saying, “The VNA of Boston plays a critical role in our city’s network of community based health care providers and we are proud to have you as our partner.”

In celebration of this milestone anniversary, the VNA of Boston has hosted a series of events over the course of the year aimed at honoring the communities it has been privileged to serve in since 1886. A display, depicting the organization’s compelling history, has been traveling around the city this summer, making stops at hospitals, universities, assisted living facilities, libraries, community centers and

government buildings. The display includes a timeline illustrating the VNA of Boston's compelling history and how its nurses provided health care services during some of the most difficult times the community has ever faced. It shows how nurses were on the front lines during the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918, the care given to veterans returning home from war, the education provided to families on proper nutrition during the Great Depression and how VNA of Boston nurses and therapists were vital caregivers during public health crises such as polio epidemics and the emergence of HIV/AIDS. The display also shows how the VNA of Boston is relevant today and how its current services and programs are aimed at keeping people of all ages healthy and at home.

In addition to the traveling display, two community service projects are planned for the fall that will give employees the opportunity to work side by side the very people they care for each day. Staff are looking forward to planting a garden at the Roxbury YMCA and helping to build a home in Dorchester with Habitat for Humanity. To culminate the yearlong celebration the organization will host its annual fundraising gala, Heroes in Health Care, on October 15, 2011 at the Taj Boston Hotel. This year's honorees include: Jim Hunt, President and CEO of the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers, Senator John F. Kerry, and Ellen Zane, President and CEO of Tufts Medical Center. Each is a true leader in health care and the VNA of Boston is proud to call them their Heroes.

For more information on the VNA of Boston and the 125th anniversary events planned visit www.bostonvna.org or call (617) 426-5555.

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Celebrating our 125th year, the Visiting Nurse Association of Boston & Affiliates provides home health care through the VNA of Boston, end-of-life support through VNA Hospice Care and private pay services through VNA Private Care. We coordinate superior care across the continuum – for all ages, health care needs, and income levels – so that our patients and their families throughout Greater Boston have peace of mind and, most importantly, can live independently at home.