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Visiting Nurse Association of Boston Receives United Way Grant
VNA of Boston to Lead New Program to Combat Maternal Depression

(Boston, MA) The Visiting Nurse Association of Boston (VNAB) was recently awarded a grant from United Way of Massachusetts Bay & Merrimack Valley. The grant will fund the Boston Home Visiting Collaborative: Enhancing Child and Parent Outcomes through In-Home Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Program. The long term goal of this new program is to increase identification and treatment of maternal depression among families with children prenatally through age five receiving home visits in Allston-Brighton to promote the social and emotional well-being of young children and their families. The VNAB expects to receive \$726,000 over a two year period to fund the program.

“We are very excited that the United Way selected the VNAB to be the lead agency in this newly funded program,” said Keren Diamond, Senior Vice President of Operations. “As a primary provider of home and community-based care in the Greater Boston area, the VNAB has the knowledge, experience and infrastructure to lead this project. We are pleased to add this cutting edge treatment to our already strong Maternal Child Health Program.”

According to the National Center for Children in Poverty, maternal depression affects 5-25% of women, a figure that in low-income families reaches 40-60%. In addition, the NCCP estimates that 70-80% of low-income women suffering from maternal depression, do not receive treatment for it. Untreated, maternal depression can lead to long-term problems for young children, including cognitive delays and aggression, particularly if a child is exposed during their first year of life.

The VNAB will partner with other community providers in the Alston Brighton neighborhood to identify participants for the program. Partner agencies include:

- Crittenton Women’s Union (Boston Neighborhoods Healthy Families),
- Boston Public Health Commission (Healthy Baby, Healthy Child),
- Family Nurturing Center (Parent-Child Home Program) and
- Jewish Family & Children’s Services (Visiting Moms).

“United Way is committed to minimizing children’s exposure to risk factors, such as maternal depression, that limit their chances of long-term success,” said Peg Sprague, Senior Vice President, of Community Impact at United Way of Massachusetts Bay & Merrimack Valley. “The Boston Home Visiting Collaborative is a great example of our efforts to drive greater impact by coming together and coordinating efforts as a community.”

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About the VNA of Boston

The Visiting Nurse Association of Boston & Affiliates provides home healthcare through the VNA of Boston, private pay services through VNA Private Care, and end-of-life support through VNA Hospice Care. We coordinate superior care across the continuum – for all ages, healthcare 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.