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NEWS RELEASE

PATIENT SAFETY IN HOME AND COMMUNITY TOP PRIORITY FOR VON CANADA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 29th, 2007 (Ottawa, ON) – From September 29th to October 4th, VON Canada (Victorian Order of Nurses) along with other healthcare organizations across the country will be celebrating our progress in ensuring patient safety is a priority of Canada's health care system. An initiative of the Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI), Canadian Patient Safety Week 2008 will be celebrated in hospitals and health care settings from coast to coast to coast.

This year, the national campaign applies to many health care settings and builds on a fundamental and key element – communication – between and among patients, clients, consumers and caregivers. This year's theme is ***Knowledge is the Best Medicine. Ask. Talk. Listen.***

"Creating and maintaining a culture of client safety is paramount to VON Canada," said Dr. Judith Shamian, President and CEO of VON Canada. "VON Canada is forging the path in this sector in order to make the safest possible home and community care for our clients across the country."

VON Canada is engaged in the following patient safety initiatives:

- VON Canada assembled a team accountable for the client safety agenda in the organization at a national level, and prioritized the mandate at the Board level.
- VON Canada invested in the development of an automated event and incident reporting system to help the organization better respond to safety issues and to enhance its ability to trend safety data over time and engage in proactive quality improvement.

- VON Canada developed a multiyear client safety plan which is built on five pillars of excellence in safety practices.
 - Developing awareness and setting priorities to improve client safety
 - Continuously improving reporting systems
 - Building skills and disseminating knowledge to enhance client safety
 - Implementing systems and processes to improve client safety
 - Creating organizational and policy level supports for client safety efforts
- VON Canada linked the client safety plan with the Risk Management and Quality Plans, and the organization's Occupational Health & Safety program, in order to ensure cohesiveness and efficacy of implementation.
- VON Canada actively seeks out joint ventures with key client safety organizations. VON Canada has entered into an innovative formal partnership with the Canadian Patient Safety Institute and the Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada to develop a pilot project based on the Safer Healthcare Now! Campaign. The partnership will explore and enhance medication reconciliation in home care. It will ultimately result in tools and learning that support home care organizations across the country to implement stronger medication reconciliation practices.

VON Canada 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 Canada is committed to continuous quality improvement and is accredited by the Canadian Council of Health Services Accreditation.

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