



*Touching Lives Since 1897*  
*Au cœur de la vie depuis 1897*

## NEWS RELEASE

### VON CELEBRATES WORLD HEALTH DAY “International Health Security”

**FOR RELEASE ON APRIL 7, 2007**

**April 5, 2007 (Ottawa, ON)** – VON (Victorian Order of Nurses) Canada marks this day by celebrating their more than 16,000 staff and volunteers who provide high quality, sensitive care and supports to millions of Canadians in need each year. VON’s home and community care providers are vital to helping people in communities live happier, healthier lives and to remain independent in their own homes for as long as possible.

This year the World Health Organization (WHO) is highlighting International Health Security. The aim of the day is to urge governments, organizations and businesses to “Invest in health, build a safer future.”

“Investing in the health of Canadians is VON’s number one priority,” said Dr. Judith Shamian, President and CEO, VON Canada. “Continuing to work together to build a stronger healthcare system is one way we can ensure all Canadians remain healthy, safe and secure.”

Threats to health security are many and varied and include sudden shocks to health and economies from emerging diseases, like SARS and avian influenza. VON responded to this threat by launching their own comprehensive pandemic plan, specific to home and community care, that mirrors the Canadian Pandemic Plan and Provincial Pandemic Plans. This plan ensures that the home and community care provided by VON staff and volunteers remains uninterrupted in the event of a pandemic. Constructed by the VON Disaster and Emergency Workgroup, the plan is an integrated effort that marks the first step towards a national VON communication and network system in preparedness for the next potential pandemic. VON has identified essential services to ensure priority needs are met, is providing cross training to accommodate the illness of VON employees and volunteers and updating client contingency 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 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 continuous quality improvement and is accredited by the Canadian Council of Health Services Accreditation.

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