



## **MEDIA ALERT**

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### **Telemedicine Is Focus of Senator Chuck Hagel and Congressmen Lee Terry Visits to the VNA of Omaha**

*Innovative program helps 170 Omahans monitor health status, avoid emergencies.*

Omaha, Neb. (December 29, 2006) – Senator Chuck Hagel and Congressman Lee Terry saw first-hand how telemedicine can increase the efficiency of healthcare, keeping costs down while improving the quality of care.

Congressmen Terry visited the Visiting Nurse Association on October 30 and Senator Hagel visited on November 7. Each came to the Agency to learn more about the VNA's HomMed program. HomMed is an in-home monitoring device and program that measures health status information and electronically conveys that information to the VNA, where a nurse reviews it and calls the patient and patient's physician if the data falls outside pre-set parameters. The VNA also is alerted if no information is recorded.

The Senator and Congressman met with VNA staff and board members. An overview of the VNA was provided, and concerns over Medicare reimbursement were discussed. VNA HomMed Coordinator, Danna Kehm demonstrated the HomMed monitor, and Terry accompanied a VNA nurse on a patient visit to learn how the telemedicine program benefits individual patients.

James C. Summerfelt, VNA President & CEO, states, "It was a great opportunity to showcase the VNA and its use of advanced technology in home care today. The telehealth monitor increases our efficiencies and allows us to be more proactive to patients' health needs, which reduces unscheduled doctor appointments, emergency room visits, and rehospitalizations."

#### **About the VNA in Omaha, Nebraska**

Established in 1896, the VNA provides home care, home infusion, hospice, and community health services. VNA staff visits clients in a variety of settings - homes, nursing care facilities, community centers, and homeless shelters. For more than 100 years, VNA remains true to its mission: to foster the dignity and well-being of the residents of our community by delivering the highest quality home and community-based health care services that provide peace of mind, quality of life, and independence.

VNA is accredited by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.

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