



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 16, 2008

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National Alliance of Wound Care to Partner with Wisconsin Organizations to Improve Pressure Ulcer Care

Glendale, Wis.....In a first-of-its-kind collaboration, the National Alliance of Wound Care (NAWC) is proud to be a partner with the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, Wisconsin Health Care Association, Wisconsin Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, Wisconsin Directors of Nursing Council, Wound Care Education Institute, West Bend Mutual Insurance, Golden Living, Metastar, Kindred Health Care Foundation and GuideOne Insurance, in a statewide initiative directed at educating registered nurses working in long-term care facilities in the prevention and treatment of pressure ulcers. The National Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel defines a pressure ulcer as a localized injury to the skin and/or underlying tissue usually over a bony area, as a result of pressure.

According to Debbie Hecker, Executive Director for the NAWC, "through this unprecedented initiative, we expect to have at least 200 registered nurses qualify to take the WCC certification exam by the end of this year.

According to the Department of Health and Family Services for the state of Wisconsin, the certification will more than double the number of wound-certified professionals working in the state.

In a press release from the WHCA dated June 11, 2008, "This initiative marks Wisconsin as having the one of the most aggressive and comprehensive approaches to pressure ulcer prevention and treatment in the nation. Wisconsin already is a national leader, well below the national average and regional target numbers for pressure ulcer prominence. In Wisconsin, the average has held steady for a number of years. However, this initiative to lower the occurrence of pressure ulcers in the state will further solidify Wisconsin's role as an innovator in health care, committed to the well-being of its residents. "

In a study conducted by the Nursing Credentialing Research Coalition (a coalition of 23 certifying bodies in nursing and other disciplines), nursing certification was found to have a dramatic impact on the practice outcomes of those certified nurses.

As part of this collaboration, the Wound Care Education Institute will provide wound care training at a reduced cost for 200 experienced registered nurses working in Wisconsin long-term care facilities. This

training will make those nurses eligible for certification in wound care through the National Alliance of Wound Care.

The National Alliance of Wound Care is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to the advancement and promotion of excellence in wound care through the certification of wound care practitioners in the United States.

Chronic wound care costs in the United States are \$20-\$25 billion annually. Secretary Karen Timberlake, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services stated at a June 11, 2008 press conference, "Pressure ulcers are preventable afflictions, and we as leaders in health and long-term care must do all we can to reduce their occurrence."

According to John Sauer, the executive director of Wisconsin Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, "This collaborative effort will enable Wisconsin's nursing facilities to become even more proficient in the care and treatment of elderly residents with complex skin conditions. It also will provide measurable preventive health benefits to our residents by further increasing the clinical skills of our caregivers."

Debbie Hecker went on to say, "The State of Wisconsin has set the example for others to follow. They have taken action to improve the way of life for its citizens. We hope and believe that there are other proactive states that will follow suit."

The NAWC is dedicated to unifying wound care providers from varied educational disciplines of the health care continuum in an effort to streamline the delivery of quality care to all patients through the certification of its practitioners.