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MASSACHUSETTS SENIOR CARE FOUNDATION RECEIVES \$225,000 GRANT TO ADDRESS REGIONAL NURSING WORKFORCE ISSUES

Massachusetts Senior Care Foundation will collaborate with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Northwest Health Foundation to advance nursing in Massachusetts

[Newton, MA] – Massachusetts Senior Care Foundation announced today that it has been chosen as one of eleven foundations nationwide to receive funding from *Partners Investing in Nursing's Future (PIN)*. The program is a multi-year, multi-million dollar national investment in America's nursing workforce to prepare them with the skills needed to serve an older and more diverse population.

Led by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the Northwest Health Foundation, PIN invests in local partnerships that create innovative model projects that can be tested and, if successful, shared nationally. Now in its sixth year of funding, PIN leverages \$14 million in grants by RWJF with more than \$14 million in matching funding.

Massachusetts Senior Care Foundation (the Foundation) is a statewide nonprofit organization committed to promoting quality care for older adults and people with disabilities through research, innovation and education. As a founding member of the Western Massachusetts Nursing Collaborative, the Foundation forged local partnerships in the Pioneer Valley with nurse leaders and the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County to tackle the area's nursing workforce needs.

The newly funded *Care Transitions Education Project (CTEP)* supports the recommendations of the recent Institute of Medicine report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, suggesting that nurses at all levels must actively engage in care transitions for patients and their families and lead quality improvement efforts. Care transitions, where patients are transferred from one care provider or care setting to another, have been associated with high rates of adverse patient outcomes and avoidable re-hospitalizations.

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“The rapidly changing health care systems in Western Massachusetts demand that our nursing workforce gain the knowledge and experience necessary to fulfill new roles and responsibilities. This project will enable nurses to collaborate across care settings and lead system improvement efforts in partnership with physicians and other health professionals,” states Kelly L. Aiken, Director of Healthcare Workforce Initiatives at the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County and CTEP Project Director.

While Massachusetts leads the nation in providing universal access to health care insurance, the Commonwealth Fund ranks the state 33rd on avoidable hospital use and costs.

“Over the past two years, Massachusetts skilled nursing facilities have been actively engaged in projects to reduce readmissions, and we have seen nurses in every setting rise to the top in these efforts,” said Carolyn Blanks, Mass Senior Care Foundation’s executive director. “Our project will create a standardized curriculum to prepare and empower working nurses and nursing students to be more effective care transition leaders.” The curriculum will be piloted in Western Massachusetts and then disseminated statewide.

The three year grant of \$225,000 will be matched by regional and state funders, including Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation, Commonwealth Corporation, the Healthcare Workforce Partnership of Western MA, the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, the Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts, and the Massachusetts Senior Care Foundation.

“All health care is local, and nurses are the cornerstone of our health care system. We need solutions that address the challenges facing a changing health care system and that utilize local and regional experience,” said Judith Woodruff, J.D., Director of workforce development at the Northwest Health Foundation and program director for *Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future*. “With this partnership, Massachusetts is in the forefront of communities nationwide helping to create a well-prepared nursing workforce.”

For more information about *Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future*, visit www.partnersinnursing.org.

For more information about the Massachusetts Senior Care Foundation and a full list of project partners, visit www.maseniorcarefoundation.org.

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