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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HMSA Foundation and Hawaii State Center for Nursing work to address state's nursing shortage

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) Foundation has been selected as one of 10 foundations in the country to participate in *Partners Investing in Nursing's Future*, a new national initiative to develop and test solutions to America's nursing shortage. Led by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the Northwest Health Foundation (NWHF), the program encourages local foundations to act as catalysts in developing grassroots strategies to establish a stable, adequate nursing workforce. *Partners Investing in Nursing's Future* is a five-year, \$10 million initiative.

To help develop solutions and lead efforts in Hawaii, the HMSA Foundation has been awarded a two-year grant of \$250,000 dollars. It will work with the Hawaii State Center for Nursing and a dozen other local partners to help address the nursing shortage in the Islands. A program requirement is for local partners to match 50 percent of the grant amount. The HMSA Foundation contributed \$105,000 and \$20,000 has come from the Hawaii State Center for Nursing, Hale Makua, and The Queens Medical Center.

Nine other foundations from around the country were selected for the national program. (*See attachment for information on the foundations.*) These organizations are exploring an array of initiatives that meet their community's specific needs, including recruiting and retaining nursing faculty, developing new roles for nurses in the care setting, and empowering nurses to better assume leadership roles.

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“The HMSA Foundation is honored to be selected to help identify solutions to the nation’s nursing shortage problem,” said Mark L. Forman, HMSA Foundation executive administrator. “We look forward to working with the Hawaii State Center for Nursing and a number of key programs and organizations to help address Hawaii’s increasing need for skilled nurses.” (*See attachment for information on the HMSA Foundation’s partners in this effort.*)

“It’s a pleasure to work with the HMSA Foundation in an innovative partnership to address the nursing shortage in Hawaii,” said Barbara P. Mathews, executive director of the Hawaii State Center for Nursing. “The nursing profession cannot solve the shortage in isolation. It will take the combined efforts of community leaders from many sectors to craft viable solutions to address this important issue.”

Across America, patients rely on nurses for personal, quality care delivered in their own communities, which is threatened when there is a nursing shortage. In fact, the nursing shortage has become so severe in some communities that it is affecting patient care and safety, health care costs, and patient outcomes. Experts say the causes of the nursing shortage are complex and range from rapid population growth in some states to an aging nurse workforce and poor working conditions.

“Nurses are the cornerstone of our health care system and want nothing more than to provide safe and compassionate care for their patients,” said Susan B. Hassmiller, R.N., Ph.D., F.A.A.N., senior program officer at RWJF. “This unique program brings foundations together to learn from each other and engage others as they address a very serious problem in their communities.”

“We are pleased to offer this grant to the HMSA Foundation, which is well-qualified to explore solutions for the people of Hawaii,” said Judith Woodruff, J.D., director of strategic initiatives of NWHF and program director for *Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future*. “One size won’t fit all, and we need solutions that will work close to home.”

For more information on *Partners Investing in Nursing's Future*, visit them online at www.PartnersInNursing.org. To learn more about RWJF and NWHF, visit them at www.rwjf.org and www.nwhf.org.

About the HMSA Foundation and Hawaii State Center for Nursing

The HMSA Foundation is a nonprofit, tax-exempt private charitable organization founded in Hawaii in 1986 with the goal of stimulating research aimed at some of the pressing issues that confront Hawaii's health care industry. The mission of the HMSA Foundation is to extend HMSA's commitment to provide community access to cost-effective health care services, promote health, provide health education and relevant research, and improve social welfare in Hawaii.

The Hawaii State Center for Nursing was established by the Legislature in 2003 to address the many complex issues regarding the nursing shortage. The main areas of focus include collecting and disseminating workforce data on the nursing shortage in Hawaii, recruitment and retention of nurses, and research on best practices and quality outcomes. The Center is located at the University of Hawaii School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene, and has an advisory board appointed by the governor. The Center, which became operational in 2005, is funded by Hawaii nurses through a surcharge on licensing fees.

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Attachments:

- Foundations Selected for *Partners Investing in Nursing's Future*
- HMSA Foundation Program Partners

Foundations Selected for *Partners Investing in Nursing's Future*

1. **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation** (Michigan) – *Nursing for Life: RN Career Transition Program*. The program will extend the careers of experienced nurses in Michigan by developing a transition/training program for nonacute care settings, such as long-term care, home care, hospice and ambulatory care.
2. **Colorado Health Foundation** (Colorado) – *Building Infrastructure and Leadership for Colorado's Nursing Workforce*. The program will pilot a clinical placement platform for the planning and implementation of a nurse-leadership fellowship program.
3. **Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, Inc.** (Maryland) – *Nursing Careers Support Initiative*. The program will implement a formalized, sustained mentoring program that seeks to address three primary objectives: retention of new nurses, development of a nurse leadership network, and a pipeline for future nurse educators in eastern Maryland.
4. **Dreyfus Health Foundation** (New York) – *Minority Nurse Mentoring in the Mississippi Delta*. The program will help develop and retain a diverse nursing workforce in the Delta region of Mississippi.
5. **Hawaii Medical Service Association Foundation** (Hawaii) – *Hawaii Partners in Nursing: Addressing Recruitment and Retention Issues in Long-Term Care*. The program will build educational capacity in long-term care facilities in Hawaii through continuing education and training, and attract new nurses into the geriatric specialty area.
6. **Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation** (Massachusetts) – *Collaborating to Advance Nursing: Developing Opportunities (CAN DO)*. The program will develop the structural framework for nurses to advance from licensed practical nurse through doctoral level, and raise the bar for cultural proficiency within the nursing profession in western Massachusetts.
7. **Mississippi Hospital Association Research and Educational Foundation** (Mississippi) – *Mississippi Critical Nursing Faculty Shortage Initiative*. The program will increase and retain nursing faculty that more accurately reflects the ethnicity and gender of the population in Mississippi.
8. **Rasmuson Foundation** (Alaska) – *Partners Investing in Nursing*. The program will increase the number of native Alaskans trained in nursing and develop a statewide preceptor-training model to be implemented in all hospitals in the state.
9. **St. James Healthcare Foundation** (Montana) – *Academy of Advanced Nursing Workforce Solutions*. The program will provide nursing students with a career success skills program to retain them in the nursing workforce in Southwestern Montana.
10. **Ventura County Community Foundation** (California) – *Ventura Nursing Legacy Project*. The program will develop a common set of sustainable long-term strategies in California to address recruitment, health policy and diversity in the nursing profession.

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HMSA Foundation Program Partners

Local Funding Partners

\$105,000 from the HMSA Foundation
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\$10,000 from the Hawaii State Center for Nursing
Barbara P. Mathews, executive director
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\$5,000 from The Queen's Medical Center, Queen Emma Nursing Institute
Cindy Kamikawa, vice president of nursing and chief nursing officer
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\$5,000 from Hale Makua
Tony Krieg, chief executive officer
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Local Project Partners (Academic sites paired with long-term care facilities)

University of Hawaii School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene
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