PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Who will care for your loved one?

St. Francis Health Services of Morris, Inc. is pleased to announce that they are a recipient of a "Nursing Facility Performance-Based Incentive Payment Program" (PIPP) grant awarded by the MN Department of Human Services (DHS). The funds of the grant will be used for a project entitled: "Employee Recruitment, Selection and Retention (ERSR) Project".

St. Francis Health Services, based in Morris, MN, is a faith-based, non-profit healthcare organization serving older adults, (12 skilled nursing facilities, 9 housing with services facilities), and individuals with developmental disabilities and mental illness across the state of Minnesota, (80 community based group homes). Presently, the services of this non-profit organization include assisted living, home healthcare, a full range of therapies, senior housing, transitional and skilled nursing care, and behavioral and residential programs.

St. Francis Health Services has identified that the recruitment, selection and retention of individuals committed to caregiving in our skilled nursing facilities is a growing and critical problem, not only for St. Francis, but for the entire long-term care industry.

Why is this a critical problem?

Reports from Government Agencies, Health Care Associations and other research organizations have increased citing nursing staff shortages around the nation. In fact, research indicates it has reached a crisis level. [1] According to the College of Business at Michigan State University, recent studies show the current tenure rate of the average worker in the US is 4.4 yrs. In contrast, the median tenure rates of a Nurse is 1.5 years in the hospital, 1.17 years in Home Health, and RNs and LPNs in nursing facilities have the lowest median tenure rate, at less than 1 year.

[2] A 2009 study conducted by the American Health Care Association (AHCA) measuring retention and turnover rates of all major nursing facility job categories which indicates a sense of staffing stability found the following: Among all job categories, the overall retention rate for nursing staff was the lowest. (Nursing staff retention was at 49.4% compared to Administrative staff at 71.1%). This study also indicated that America's nursing facilities are experiencing high levels of nursing turnover (Nursing staff at 45.2% compared to Administrative staff at 20.3%).

The low level of retention and the high level of turnover among Registered Nursing Assistants (NAR's) continue to be of particular concern to nursing facilities as NAR's are responsible for much of the direct, hands on resident care. Nationally, turnover rates for NAR's in nursing homes are estimated to be 71% per year.

What are the consequences of not solving this problem?
Low nursing staff retention is already identified as a significant problem in our skilled nursing facilities and given the rural demographic area shortage of (prospective employees/applicants) and the aging population growth, will continue to get worse. [3] According to a Health and Human Services report from April 2009, the current worker shortage is likely to be exacerbated by the increased demand for long-term care workers as a result of the aging population. The number of older Americans in need of long-term care is growing, and is predicted to more than double by 2040. A number of factors will contribute to this growth. Due to aging of the Baby Boomer generation, currently the rate of new retirees is at 10,000 every day from 2012 until 2030, and there will also be a significant increase in the size of the elderly population aged 85 and older. As a result of demographic shifts in the U.S., there already is a projected need for 325,000 additional nursing aides, orderlies and attendants by 2014, an increase of 22% from 2004.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Employment Projections 2010-2020* released in February 2012, the Registered Nursing workforce is the top occupation in terms of job growth through 2020. It is expected that the number of employed nurses will grow from 2.74 million in 2010 to 3.45 million in 2020, an increase of 712,000 or 26%. The projections further explain the need for replacing 495,500 RNs (the entire population of Minneapolis) in the workforce. This brings the total number of job openings for RNs due to growth and replacements to 1.2 million by 2020.

The purpose of St. Francis Health Services' two year $2.4M project is to develop new systems for recruitment, selection and onboarding of new nursing staff, with the goal of reducing the turnover problem we have increasingly been experiencing in our skilled nursing facilities. The project will assess and redefine the current employee resources and hiring processes. We will introduce new systems for recruitment and selection procedures and implement orientation processes that will improve the onboarding of new employees. No employees will leave our employment without management understanding why and using the information to reduce turnover. The project will also incorporate results of employee satisfaction surveys and utilize the MN Report Card scores for benchmarking Staff Retention and measuring whether objectives are met.

Some of the key components of the project are a full-time corporate RN ERSR Coordinator; creating ERSR teams in each of our twelve skilled nursing facilities; a multi-media marketing campaign to find and attract candidates for employment; an applicant tracking system which will aid in the selection process, performance reviews, retention and turn-over data management, and employee satisfaction. There is also an onboarding component in each facility which provides for a mentor with each new nursing staff to get them successfully oriented to their new job. A final component will be an updating of Computer Based Training modules for orientation and

annual in-services, making them more readily accessible through the St. Francis Health Services web site and intranet.

This ERSR project will be implemented at all twelve of St. Francis Health Services' skilled nursing facilities in the following Minnesota communities: Aitkin, Browns Valley, Chisholm, Duluth (2), Farmington, Hibbing, Little Falls, Morris, Renville, Thief River Falls, and Zumbrota.

For information on the St. Francis Health Services ERSR project please contact project Coordinator, Pam Leach at 320-894-0964.

Bibliography:

1. Dr. Frederick P. Morgeson, Michigan State University, *"Will They Stay or Will They Go Now?"*

2. Report of Findings 2009 Nursing Facility Staff Retention and Turnover Survey, American Health Care Association Department of Research, May 2011

3. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS), ASPE/DALTCP Report in *The Gerontologist (2009, 49(2):198-210* *http://aspe.hhs.gov/_/office_specific/daltcp.cfm*

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