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**ENDOWMENT FOR HEALTH AWARDS PLANNING GRANT TO 5 MENTAL HEALTH CENTERS
Greater Nashua One of Five Centers Ready to Implement Electronic Medical Record**

NH (August 4, 2011) – With funding from the Endowment for Health, five of New Hampshire’s ten community mental health centers are on their way to implementing an electronic medical record (EMR) system.

Seacoast Mental Health Center, Greater Nashua Mental Health Center, Genesis Behavioral Health, Monadnock Family Services and Northern Human Services received a planning grant to support some of the costs associated with an EMR. The EMR is a critical step in improving the quality of care for patients and contributing to the financial sustainability of a safety net system. The five centers have worked collaboratively over the past year to purchase a shared EMR and have contracted with Lavender & Wyatt Systems, Inc. of Little Rock, Arkansas to implement the project. The acquisition of the EMR for the five centers is expected to impact behavioral healthcare for over 20,000 children, families, adults and older adults statewide.

“We are so grateful for the Endowment for Health’s support,” said Jay Couture, Executive Director of Seacoast Mental Health Center, “The EMR will allow us to better serve our patients, improve quality of care and communicate more effectively with other providers. These efficiencies are expected to lead to time and cost savings down the road.”

The support the five centers received from the Endowment for Health comes at a critical time. “Federal regulations require all healthcare organizations to implement an EMR by 2015, yet community mental health was not able to access the stimulus funds made available,” stated Maggie Pritchard, Executive Director of Genesis Behavioral Health, “Without grant funding, we all face significant fiscal challenges in implementing an EMR at our respective centers.”

Implementation of the EMR at the community mental health centers will allow for the smooth exchange of essential health information between mental health and primary care providers. “We know that individuals living with serious mental illness are at greater risk for co-morbid health disorders, as well as early mortality, dying, on average, 25 years sooner than those in the general population. The EMR system will allow for better integrated mental and physical health care for our patients, leading to greater longevity and improved quality of life,” according to Dr. Hisham Hafez, Executive Director and Chief Medical Officer of Greater Nashua Mental Health Center. “The Endowment for Health’s grant will have a long-reaching positive impact upon the lives of many Granite Staters.”



The Endowment for Health was established in 1999. Since 2001, the Endowment has awarded more than 800 grants totaling more than \$33 million to support a wide range of health-related programs and projects in New Hampshire. For more information about proposal guidelines and funding priorities for the 2011 program year, visit www.endowmentforhealth.org.

The five community mental health centers involved in this project are part of the NH Community Behavioral Health Association, an organization comprised of the ten community mental health centers throughout New Hampshire. These centers serve individuals in our state who are living with—and recovering from—mental illness and emotional disorders. This network of mental health centers provide ongoing and emergency behavioral health services to over 52,200 New Hampshire residents annually, a number that includes over 13,500 children.

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