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**THE JOHN A. HARTFORD FOUNDATION ESTABLISHES
FOUR NEW CENTERS OF GERIATRIC NURSING EXCELLENCE**

**—Arizona State University, Pennsylvania State University, and the Universities of
Minnesota and Utah tapped to recruit and train nursing faculty to meet the critical
shortage of nurses to care for the elderly—**

NEW YORK CITY (September 25, 2007) – In response to the critical nationwide shortage of nurses ready and able to care for a booming elderly population, the John A. Hartford Foundation today announced a major expansion of its Centers of Geriatric Nursing Excellence (CGNE) initiative. Four Centers—at Arizona State University, Pennsylvania State University, the University of Minnesota and the University of Utah—will each receive \$1 million to prepare over 500 nursing faculty with expertise in geriatrics. These new faculty will educate the next (and critically needed) generation of nurses to improve the health and well-being of older adults.

The four new CGNEs will join five existing Centers at the Universities of Arkansas, Iowa, and Pennsylvania; the University of California, San Francisco; and Oregon Health and Science University. The Foundation has funded these schools since 2000 to advance academic geriatric nursing through education, research, practice, and policy activities.

Training in geriatrics is vitally important for nurses, as the presentation of illness in older people is often more complex than in younger patients. For example, the signs of an infection in an older person may include falling or sudden confusion rather than a fever, the most common symptom in younger people. Without this knowledge, an infection may go untreated and result in overwhelming problems, and possibly death.

“Nurses are on the frontline of caring for our parents, grandparents, and ourselves as we age and face the diseases and frailty that come with getting older,” said Corinne Rieder, Executive Director of the John A. Hartford Foundation. “It is critical that we improve and increase the number of nurses trained in geriatric best practices.” Since 1996, she noted, the Trustees of the John A. Hartford Foundation have invested more than \$67 million in nursing initiatives to improve the care of older adults.

Needed: Faculty to Train Gero-Expert Nurses

In a little over two decades, the number of people in the U.S. over the age of 65 is expected to double to 70 million. Older adults account for 13 percent of the population, yet they represent 46 percent of patients in critical care, 50 percent of hospital days, and 70 percent of home health services recipients. Nurses play an essential role in caring for ill and frail older adults in all of these settings, as well as in promoting healthy aging. Only 42 percent of schools of nursing employ full-time faculty specializing in geriatrics and only 34 percent of baccalaureate nursing programs had a freestanding course in geriatrics as of 2003. Less than one percent of all registered nurses are certified in geriatric nursing. However, there is an extremely limited supply of faculty with the expertise to train future nurses in the essential elements of older adult care. In her letter of support, Governor Janet Napolitano of Arizona attests, “Educating more geriatric nursing faculty is critical to the health and well-being of our diverse, elderly Arizonans, whose population over 85 years of age will increase by 102 percent within the next 15 years.”

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The John A. Hartford Foundation Centers of Geriatric Nursing Excellence will develop innovative programs to recruit and retain new geriatric nursing faculty, and to retrain existing faculty in geriatric nursing. During the next five years, the four new Centers will prepare 178 new doctoral and master's trained geriatric nursing educators to teach nursing students. At least 340 existing nursing faculty will receive geriatrics training to help them better educate their students in the care of older adults. Three of the centers will create regional consortia to expand their geographic reach and train nurses serving elderly populations most in need. "The superb addition of four fine schools of nursing to the Centers of Geriatric Nursing Excellence initiative will prepare a significant number of needed faculty and expert clinicians and researchers in geriatric nursing," says Claire M. Fagin, PhD, RN, a distinguished leader in the field.

The Centers of Geriatric Nursing Excellence are part of the Foundation's Building Academic Geriatric Nursing Capacity Initiative, organized by a coordinating center at the American Academy of Nursing. They were created in response to the critical shortage of nursing faculty with the geriatric skills needed to educate future generations of nurses, and the scarcity of geriatric nursing curricula and research. For more information on the John A. Hartford Foundation's Building Academic Geriatric Nursing Capacity Initiative and Centers of Geriatric Nursing Excellence, please visit <http://www.geriatricnursing.org>.

For more details on the Centers of Geriatric Nursing Excellence, please contact Dr. Patricia Archbold, Director of the John A. Hartford Building Academic Geriatric Nursing Capacity Initiative at the American Academy of Nursing: (802) 229-2620.

For more information about each new Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence, please contact the following Center directors:

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