



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 14, 2011

Contact: Melissa Jones

804.762.9400

melissajones@freeagentsmarketing.com

Bon Secours Virginia Health System Adopts Nicotine-Free Hiring Policy *Measure is part of not-for-profit health system's commitment to employee wellness*

As part of Bon Secours Virginia's investment in employee health and commitment to accountable care, the not-for-profit health system is initiating a nicotine-free hiring policy. Effective Nov. 30, 2011, nicotine users will not be eligible for employment within Bon Secours Virginia Health System.

The policy is an extension of the Bon Secours' mission to provide good help and model good health for patients, employees and the community. Bon Secours Virginia is part of a growing national trend to adopt a nicotine-free hiring policy and joins national health care leaders, including the Cleveland Clinic and Humana in encouraging a healthy lifestyle and reducing health care costs by promoting a nicotine-free environment.

The health system has prohibited smoking and the use of all tobacco products from inside the hospitals and facilities as well as the property immediately outside since 2009. Current employees will not be affected by the new policy. Bon Secours will continue to offer smoking cessation support, including classes and access to the American Cancer Association QuitLine.

"More than 12,000 Bon Secours Virginia employees care for and inspire patients every day," said Peter J. Bernard, CEO of Bon Secours Virginia. "It is our responsibility to encourage our employees to be as healthy as possible and to offer creative and convenient ways to ensure their own health and wellness."

Under the new policy, applicants for open positions at Bon Secours Virginia will be tested for nicotine as part of the pre-employment screening process. Those who are denied employment due to a positive nicotine test are encouraged to take steps to stop the use of nicotine and reapply to open positions after a period of six months.

-more-

Nicotine-free hiring, page 2

The nicotine-free hiring policy complements Bon Secours' employee wellness and employee assistance programs, which provide comprehensive health services, including mental health counseling, health management resources and an on-site employee clinic and pharmacy.

"Employee wellness is a top priority for Bon Secours Virginia," said Bonnie Shelor, senior vice president of human resources for Bon Secours Virginia. "The nicotine-free hiring initiative is the newest element of our ongoing commitment to employee health and wellbeing, and we are pleased that the majority of our employees are fully engaged in our overall wellness initiatives."

According to the American Heart Association, smoking is linked to lung cancer, heart disease, stroke and other chronic lung diseases and is the most preventable cause of death in the United States.

Nicotine-free hiring is becoming a national trend among hospitals and health care systems. More than 6,000 U.S. companies have initiated these policies.

#

About Bon Secours Virginia Health System

Bon Secours Virginia provides good help to thousands of Virginians through a network of hospitals, primary and specialty care practices, ambulatory care sites and continuing care facilities across the Commonwealth. The not-for-profit health system employs about 12,000 people, including over 300 physicians as part of the Bon Secours Medical Group.

The fourth largest and only faith-based health system in Virginia, Bon Secours Virginia offers a full range of services including cardiac, women's, children's, orthopaedics, oncology, neurosciences and surgery at seven award-winning hospitals.

- Bon Secours Richmond is St. Mary's Hospital, Memorial Regional Medical Center, Richmond Community Hospital and St. Francis Medical Center
- Bon Secours Hampton Roads is Maryview Medical Center, DePaul Medical Center and Mary Immaculate Hospital

About Bon Secours Richmond Foundation

Bon Secours' ministry of providing good help to those in need is supported by the Bon Secours Richmond Foundation, which raises funds to create healthy communities, advance clinical innovation and provide an extraordinary experience of care.