



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **NH Voices for Health Announces Hire of Inaugural Full-Time Executive Director, Susan Smith, BSN, MHA**

*Susan Smith to lead health care advocacy organization to improve access to quality health care in New Hampshire*



CONCORD – Longtime health care professional and administrator Susan Smith has been named Executive Director of NH Voices for Health. Smith will be the inaugural full-time Executive Director for the organization beginning August 24, 2011.

“NH Voices for Health is proud to announce that Susan Smith will be joining our team and providing it with the leadership needed to continue a track record of success,” said Mike Cohen, Interim Chair of the Board of Directors. “Susan’s experience and obvious passion for ensuring strong healthcare systems in New Hampshire is a great fit for the mission and work of NH Voices for Health.”

Smith’s career as a healthcare professional has spanned over 20 years. She has extensive professional experience in leadership roles with nonprofit healthcare organizations in both New Hampshire and North Carolina.

Most recently, Smith served as Administrator of Taylor Community, a continuing care retirement community in Laconia with a tradition of providing quality care and services to seniors in the Lakes Region for over 100 years. Prior to Taylor Community, Smith provided leadership for the operational and clinical performance of patient care services at Lakes Region General Healthcare (LRGH).

“Access to quality health care is a critical issue for me, and one which has been a focus of my life’s work,” Smith said. “I am excited about the opportunity to pursue my passions for advocacy and to make a positive impact in the lives of others in this new role. As the Executive Director of NH Voices for Health, I will be able to continue the strong collaboration Voices has built between health policy leaders in New Hampshire. My experiences as a nurse and healthcare administrator in hospital and long-term care settings, dealing directly with the strengths and limitations of our health care system, provide insight into how to address health care issues in this financially difficult environment.”

Smith’s passion for protecting the vulnerable and ensuring that all citizens have access to high-quality, affordable health care extends to her personal time; she has served on the Board of Directors of Genesis Behavioral Health and is a member of several state and local community-based service organizations and healthcare related workgroups.

Smith is an alumnus of Leadership NH, Class of 2011. She is also a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives, is a Board Certified Nurse Executive through American Nurses Credentialing Center, and sits on the Commission on Government Affairs for the NH Nurses' Association.

A graduate of Saint Anselm's College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (BSN), magna cum laude, Smith also earned a Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA) from the University of Minnesota.

At Voices, Smith will work closely with the Board of Directors and Policy Director Lisa Kaplan Howe, who served as both Voices Project Coordinator and Policy Director during the organization's start-up phase and is largely credited with growing the reputation and credibility of NH Voices for Health during that time.

"I'm eager to get started and to ensure the work to bring quality, affordable health care to all Granite State families remains a top priority in New Hampshire," Smith said.

### **More on NH Voices for Health's New Non-Profit Status**

NH Voices for Health initially formed as a grant proposal to a national foundation to support increased collaboration between health policy and health focused organizations in New Hampshire. The concept focused on a statewide policy network to share and exchange health access ideas and to support one another on policy initiatives.

While the proposal was not ultimately accepted, the idea was: New Hampshire-based health policy organizations recognized the potential of the network and gained the support of the NH Charitable Foundation, Endowment for Health and HNH Foundation. Now in its fourth year, the network has become an independent 501 c3 non-profit organization with a Governing Board and more than 40 network members representing over 200,000 individuals statewide who are motivated to help improve access to quality, affordable health care in New Hampshire.

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*New Hampshire Voices for Health is a non-profit organization that coordinates a statewide policy network of individuals, small businesses and advocacy organizations committed to ensuring a strong, high quality and affordable health care system for the families and businesses of our state. The network represents over 200,000 members, consumers and constituents statewide who are motivated to help improve access to quality, affordable health care in New Hampshire.*

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