

**UAM Giving Back Press Release - SMMC**



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**Southern Maine Medical Center Receives Grant from  
Universal American**

*Technology funded will monitor patients' health from home*

Biddeford, Maine, DECEMBER 23, 2009 – Southern Maine Medical Center (SMMC) is pleased to announce that it has received a \$40,000 grant from Universal American and its family of companies which offers Medicare Advantage health plans and Medicare prescription drug plans. The grant, awarded through the Universal American's 'Collaborating for Good Health' Giving Back Program, will be used to purchase additional telehealth monitors. Telehealth is a leading technology that enables SMMC Visiting Nurses to effectively monitor the health of patients in their homes, a care model that is highly preferred by patients and less costly than care provided in an institutional setting or in the hospital.

"We are honored and delighted that Universal American has selected our SMMC Visiting Nurses' telehealth program for this generous donation," said Ed McGeachey, president and CEO of Southern Maine Medical Center. "The grant will further SMMC's mission to 'provide excellent health care with compassion and respect.' The monies will be used to purchase the newest telehealth monitors, enabling our home health nurses

to care for patients from the comfort of their homes while benefiting from the latest electronic medical monitoring systems. The devices are user-friendly and well-received by all our patients; even those who may have never used a computer before quickly appreciate and rely upon this innovative method of care support.”

SMMC Visiting Nurses initiated the Telehealth program in 2007 to take advantage of the ways that technology can improve the care of their patients.

Elaine Brady, executive director of SMMC Visiting Nurses, reports that through the utilization of a telehealth monitor installed in a patient’s home, SMMC Visiting Nurses are able to regularly monitor blood pressure, pulse, temperature, weight, blood oxygen levels and blood glucose, all remotely. “The electronic data is easily accessed so nurses can keep close watch on how a homebound patient is doing without traveling to their home,” Brady noted. “This is reassuring to patients and also makes home nursing care far more efficient as the information can be relayed electronically, saving time, paperwork and travel time, and ensuring that the patient’s medical status is up to date throughout the SMMC system on a real time basis.”

According to Bob Downs, vice president and general manager for Universal American in Maine, “Our Healthy Collaboration<sup>SM</sup>” model demonstrates our approach to healthcare and that the key to an older adult’s wellbeing is their relationship to the community. It is an honor to support organizations like SMMC that share this commitment to embracing older adults.”

Since the inception of the Telehealth program, SMMC has seen a decrease in unnecessary hospitalizations and emergency visits by patients. The program has also enhanced the independence and peace of mind for older patients and their families.

“I love this monitor,” said Debbi Lord, a Telehealth program patient. “It’s very reassuring to know that my nurse keeps track of all my activities and it lets my doctor know how I’m doing on a daily basis.”

Universal American, through its family of healthcare companies, is focused on providing comprehensive and affordable healthcare for people with Medicare. Universal American's Medicare plans are based on A Healthy Collaboration<sup>SM</sup>, which is a dedication to working collaboratively with its members and their healthcare professionals in order to improve their overall health and wellbeing.

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### **About Southern Maine Medical Center**

Southern Maine Medical Center (SMMC) is a national award-winning healthcare system including a medical center offering excellent clinical care, a multi-specialty physician services group and a visiting nurses subsidiary. SMMC features Maine's newest state-of-the-art emergency and fast track care as well as a full range of inpatient and outpatient services at its 150-bed acute care medical center. SMMC's physician services offers high quality medical care through offices located in Biddeford, Kennebunk, Old Orchard Beach, and Saco and a wide array of outpatient services at its diagnostic and therapy centers in Saco, Kennebunk, and Biddeford. Through its affiliate, SMMC Visiting Nurses, SMMC provides superior home nursing care. SMMC is Joint Commission accredited, state-licensed, and is a member of the MaineHealth system.

### **About Universal American**

Universal American, through its family of healthcare companies, offers benefit plans designed to promote collaboration among our members and their healthcare professionals. This Healthy Collaboration<sup>SM</sup> improves the health and well being of more than two million people with Medicare every day. For more information on Universal American and its Medicare Advantage and Prescription Drug Plans, which include: Today's Options® PPO and Today's Options® PFFS, Community CCRx<sup>SM</sup> PDP and PrescribaRx<sup>SM</sup> PDP, offered in the Maine area, visit our website at [www.UniversalAmerican.com](http://www.UniversalAmerican.com).

### **About Universal American's 'Collaborating for Good Health' Giving Back Program**

Through its Giving Back Campaign, Universal American supports local organizations that are dedicated to helping older adults and people with Medicare maximize access to services and increase their quality of life.