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Virginia Health Information and Virginia Department of Health Partner to Raise Awareness about Heart Health

Richmond, VA—**Virginia Health Information**, a nonprofit, today announced that they will be presenting findings for cardiac care health among patients treated at Virginia hospitals during a press conference on **Friday, March 9 at 10:30 a.m.** in the **House Briefing Room** on the first floor of the **General Assembly** building. VHI will present three posters that illustrate the findings from its **Cardiac Care Report**, published last week during American Heart Month. Through its partnership with the Virginia Department of Health, VHI is presenting the posters to raise awareness of cardiac health and encourage Virginians to help prevent heart disease. The posters focus on cost savings associated with lower admissions due to congestive heart failure, high readmission rates for cardiac patients, and the new cardiac care tool found at www.vhi.org/cardiac. VHI's web tool allows consumers to compare hospitals' cardiac quality of care and find local doctors treating heart disease.

"The findings to be presented at this year's cardiac press conference from VHI's Cardiac Report show that Virginians are taking their heart health seriously," said Michael T. Lundberg Executive Director, VHI. "Our statewide summaries show a 23 percent decrease in deaths among patients hospitalized for cardiac care over the past five years. However, the data also reveals 1 out of 6 congestive heart failure patients are readmitted within 30 days. This is almost double the readmission rate for other types of cardiac care such as coronary artery bypass, angioplasty and cardiac catheterizations. These findings show we still have a lot of work to do."

Highlights of VHI's posters include:

- ♥ Admissions for Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) can sometimes be prevented. In Virginia, CHF admissions declined by 8 percent from 2006 to 2010 which resulted in an estimated, Agency for Health Care Research and Quality's (AHRQ) cost savings of \$15,000,000
- ♥ Steps that both patients and health care providers can take to lower readmission rates
- ♥ Snapshots of VHI's Cardiac Care website that provides consumers information to better understand types of cardiac care, compare hospitals' quality of care and find local doctors treating heart disease

Studies show that experienced hospitals and doctors may have better results in heart care. VHI's free report shows how often hospitals provide cardiac care. This year's event will include free blood pressure screenings and mini-chair massages from the Virginia Department of Health's staff and Medical Reserve Corps volunteers.

Virginia Health Information (VHI) is the nonprofit organization that businesses, consumers, the Commonwealth of Virginia and health insurance companies go to for health information. VHI publishes reports and consumer guides on health insurance, hospitals, HMOs, nursing facilities, physicians and other topics at www.vhi.org. To find the latest updates on health care data and statistics, find and like VHI on Facebook at www.facebook.com/vahealth.

