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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Nashoba Valley Medical Center Named to AARP's List of 2008 Best Employers for Workers over 50

Ayer, MA – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—September 23, 2008—Nashoba Valley Medical Center has been nationally ranked 30th in the AARP annual listing of the Best Employers for Workers Over 50. The announcement was made today by AARP CEO Bill Novelli in Washington, D.C.

Nashoba Valley Medical Center joins a broad group of 50 employers that includes four other Massachusetts employers: the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge (#14), Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston (#21), Harvard University, Cambridge (#34) and DentaQuest, Charlestown (#38). Cornell University in Ithaca, NY was ranked at the top of the list. Additionally, *AARP The Magazine*, will feature the 2008 Best Employers in its November-December issue, in homes September 25, along with an extensive feature story on re-careering and discovering new passions at age 50+. The complete article and list can also be found online at www.aarpthemagazine.org.

“A diverse group of corporations and not-for-profits are increasingly recognizing the importance of innovative policies as employers seek to retain and recruit experienced

workers,” Novelli said in announcing the winners. “Progressive practices lead to more productive workers.”

Novelli noted in the face of rising health care costs, many Best Employers are adopting practices such as health screenings and other wellness programs that will pay off for both the employee and the employer.

“Nashoba Valley Medical Center’s mission is to serve the patient. The quality of care that our patients receive is based upon the quality of our employees. We value the experience that our mature workers bring to their positions and we provide them with flexible programs that suit their needs. This provides the staff with the opportunity to balance their careers with their changing lifestyles,” said CEO Steve Roach.

According to Wanda Edwards, NVMC’s director of human resources, 50+ workers make up 45-percent of the entire staff, while 29-percent are between the ages of 40 and 49. “We have provided schedules that allow staff to work a truly flexible schedule to accommodate their changing lives. This generation wants the flexibility to possibly spend a bit more time vacationing, or caring for their aging parents or even grandchildren. We have some employees who work as little as two days a week (12-hour shifts) and still maintain health and welfare benefits, continuing education and retirement benefits,” said Edwards.

Nashoba Valley Medical Center has implemented innovative employee wellness programs beginning in 2006 based upon the “Biggest Loser” TV show, in order to encourage more healthy lifestyles for employees. Some 129 enrolled and it included bi-weekly weigh-ins, cholesterol screening and blood pressure screening. Throughout the first four months, health related and fitness related lectures by staff members of NVMC’s Diabetes and Endocrine Center and Cardiac Services, were conducted for all employees. Corporate parent Essent Healthcare of Nashville, TN, has since added to the program with the “Amazing Journey” walking program that offers participants who walk 500 miles, a \$75 gift certificate to use for athletic shoes.

The Best Employers winners will be honored at a dinner on October 7 in Chicago. Candidates are vetted to ensure that practices meet the needs of mature workers. Key

areas of consideration include: recruiting practices, opportunities for training, education and career development; workplace accommodations; alternative work options such as flexible scheduling, job sharing, and phased retirement; employee health and pension benefits; retiree work opportunities; and training and development.

Nashoba Valley Medical Center has 534 employees.

About Nashoba Valley Medical Center

Nashoba Valley Medical Center (NVMC) is an acute care hospital serving the healthcare needs of communities in North Central Massachusetts. As a trusted member of the community since 1964, NVMC is well known for its strengths in many clinical areas, including emergency medicine, cardiology, gastroenterology, oncology, orthopedics, and surgery. The hospital also offers a diverse array of outpatient services, including its renowned Diabetes and Endocrine Center, cancer care, cardiac rehabilitation as well as general rehabilitation services, a Sleep Center and Occupational Health Center. NVMC is an affiliate of Essent Healthcare, Inc. For more information about NVMC, visit www.nashobamed.com. More information about Essent is available at www.essenthealthcare.com.