



Visiting Nurse Association
of Central Jersey

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Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey Goes RED To Fight Heart Disease

Celise Hayward, a Monmouth County resident and VNACJ employee can tell patients from first hand experience the importance of loving your heart.

RED BANK, NJ, February, 2008 – Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey (VNACJ) joins in the fight to reduce heart disease by asking more than 1,000 employees to leave their bright orange logo attire at home on Thursday, February 14 and wear red in recognition of GO RED Month.

Heart disease is the number one killer of American woman. More than one of every 2.5 female deaths is the result of cardiovascular disease. VNACJ is participating in a national GO RED campaign that has been instrumental in raising awareness of the risk of heart disease and in educating women about the steps they can take to live a healthier life. Celise Hayward, a VNACJ employee and resident of Neptune, has more reason than most to support this cause. Last year, Ms. Hayward suffered from cardiac arrest while at work.

“Like a lot of people, I never really thought that I would have a heart attack,” said Ms. Hayward. “I was diagnosed with high blood pressure in my early 30’s so I always get regular check ups. I’m not overweight and I exercise fairly regularly – mostly walking. I was just coming back from lunch when my chest began to feel very heavy and I started having sharp pains down my arm to my elbow.”

Fortunately for Ms. Hayward, she works in the right place and was immediately assisted by the nurses in the Red Bank VNACJ Community Health Center on the first floor. She was taken by ambulance to the hospital and only after doing blood work did they determine that she had experienced a heart attack.

“It’s important to be aware of your body and to recognize any changes. The doctor felt that the attack was related to stress. Now I am very aware of my stress level and I have learned to control it with breathing exercises. I try to eat healthier foods and make sure that taking care of my heart is part of my everyday health program. I really encourage women to get a check up and to become educated about the risks of heart disease. I think the GO RED campaign is terrific – it’s so important to love your heart.” Hayward added.

On GO RED day, Laura Stone, VNACJ public health staff nurse and nominee of the 2007 American Heart Association Go Red for Women, Woman of Distinction Award, will be on hand at the Red Bank location to answer questions, hand out educational materials, and give away ‘red dress’ pins. In addition, employees are encouraged to take an at home check up offered on the www.goredforwomen.org website.

In 2007, VNA of Central Jersey provided care to more than 100,000 people in the community. Health education is a major focus of all VNACJ programs and services. Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey, now in its 95th year of service, is a nonprofit provider of home health care and hospice services. The organization also offers extensive community-based health and wellness services throughout its service area of Monmouth, Middlesex, and Ocean counties.