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NEWS RELEASE

CGFNS DENIES *VISASCREEN*® CERTIFICATES FOR PHILIPPINE NURSES WHO PASSED THE COMPROMISED JUNE 2006 PHILIPPINE LICENSURE EXAMINATION

Philadelphia, February 14, 2007 *--*After careful consideration, the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS International) has decided that those Philippine nurses who were sworn in as licensed nurses in the Philippines following their passing the compromised licensure exam of June 2006 are not eligible for a *VisaScreen* Certificate. CGFNS began investigating this issue soon after the first reports of irregularities were received and sent a fact-finding mission to the Philippines in September 2006. CGFNS has concluded that the licensure process for those who received their license as a result of passing the compromised June 2006 licensure examination raises significant questions about the accurate assessment of the competencies of many of those individuals.

Therefore, CGFNS is unable to certify that the licensure is comparable to a U.S. license. In this instance, applicable U.S. immigration law will not permit CGFNS to issue the *VisaScreen* Certificate required of internationally educated health care workers to those nurses who obtained Philippine licensure on the basis of passing the June 2006 nursing licensure examination. CGFNS notes, however, that the June 2006 passers are able to overcome this bar and qualify for a *VisaScreen* Certificate by taking the equivalent of Tests 3 and 5 on a future licensing examination administered by Philippine regulatory authorities and obtaining a passing score.

Consequently, CGFNS urges the Philippine authorities to provide an opportunity for re-take of those tests without surrender of licensure so that the June 2006 passers may qualify for the *VisaScreen* Certificate. The integrity of foreign licensing systems ultimately affects the health and safety of patients in the United States, a primary consideration of CGFNS in its role in evaluating candidates under U.S. immigration law. The decision announced today is made in support of this critical mission of CGFNS.

CGFNS is an internationally recognized authority on credentials evaluation and verification pertaining to the education, registration and licensure of nurses and healthcare professionals worldwide. CGFNS is an immigration-neutral, nonprofit organization with 30 years of experience in certifying the credentials of over 450,000 internationally educated nurses and other healthcare workers.

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