FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Two of North Valley Hospital’s Outreach Clinics Become Certified as Rural Health Clinics

WHITEFISH, MT – July 11, 2012: North Valley Hospital announces that North Valley Professional Center in Columbia Falls and North Country Medical Clinic in Eureka have been certified as Rural Health Clinics.

The Rural Health Clinic (RHC) Program was established in 1977 to help address the need for healthcare services in rural areas. Certified by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, an RHC helps improve access to primary care in rural areas by using a team approach of physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and certified nurse midwives. In addition, RHCs are required to furnish routine diagnostic and laboratory services and establish relationships with providers and suppliers to furnish medically necessary services not available at the clinic along with first response emergency care during normal business hours.

“It’s a challenge for some rural patients to travel to a larger community to seek healthcare,” said Jason Spring, CEO of North Valley Hospital. “With the RHC certification, we’ll be able to expand our services to patients in the Columbia Falls and Eureka areas and offer a sliding fee scale to help those in need to make healthcare services more accessible and affordable.”

With the sliding fee scale, discounts for in-office services which are felt to be medically necessary by the clinics’ care providers are offered based upon household income and size using federal poverty guidelines. If the applicant appears to be eligible for Medicaid, a written denial of coverage by Medicaid may be required.
Both North Country Medical Clinic and North Valley Professional Center offer on-site x-ray and laboratory services. In addition to the primary care and pediatric physicians in the clinics, other physicians and surgeons in a variety of specialties are available by referral or on a visiting basis to serve patients in the outreach areas.

For more information on North Valley’s outreach clinics, visit [http://www.nvhosp.org/nv.nsf/view/clinicindex](http://www.nvhosp.org/nv.nsf/view/clinicindex).

To contact the clinics call 406-297-2438 for North Country Medical Clinic; 406-892-3208 for North Valley Professional Center.

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About North Valley Hospital:

North Valley Hospital is a private 501©(3), non-profit community Critical Access hospital governed by a Volunteer Board of Directors from the North Valley area. North Valley Hospital is the only hospital in Montana affiliated with Planetree. Planetree is a non-profit organization that provides education and information in a collaborative community of healthcare organizations, facilitating efforts to create patient centered care in healing environments. North Valley Hospital receives no tax support for its services. The hospital and its affiliate clinics serve Flathead and Lincoln counties.

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