

CORNERSTONE IN FOCUS: Secretary Leavitt Recognizes New Chartered Value Exchanges in Second Round of Applications

HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt has recognized eleven communities with a special federal distinction for their strong actions and commitment to improving quality and value in health care.

These communities join 14 others, known as Chartered Value Exchanges (CVE). Together, they are part of a nationwide movement to transform our current health care sector to a health care system based on value. CVEs are local collaborations of health care providers, employers, insurers, and consumers working jointly to improve quality and make pricing and quality information more available to consumers.

"Local public-private collaboration is essential to ensure a health system based on quality and value," Secretary Leavitt said.

As Chartered Value Exchanges, communities have access to information from Medicare that gauges the quality of care physicians provide to patients. In the future, these performance measurement results will be combined with similar private-sector data to produce a more comprehensive consumer guide on quality of care. In addition, these communities now join a nationwide Learning Network sponsored by HHS' Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality providing peer-to-peer learning experiences. For a list of the newly recognized communities, visit www.hhs.gov/news/press/2008pres/09/20080903a.html

Physician Groups Score High In Medicare Demo

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced recently that all physician groups participating in the Physician Group Practice (PGP) Demonstration improved the quality of care delivered to patients with chronic illnesses during the second performance year of the demonstration.

As a result, the 10 groups earned \$16.7 million in incentive payments under the demonstration that rewards health care providers for improving health outcomes and coordinating the overall health care needs of Medicare patients assigned to the groups.

To learn more about CMS' PGP demonstration visit www.cms.hhs.gov/center/press.asp

Enhanced Performance Information on Hospital Compare Now Available for Download

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), announced last month important additions to the *Hospital Compare* Web site that will give consumers even better insight into the quality of care provided by their local hospitals.

The improvements include the addition of a mortality measure for pneumonia and, for the first time on *Hospital Compare*, publicly reported measures for hospital care of children.



Since its inception in March 2005 *Hospital Compare* has become a popular tool for consumers and their care givers in making health care decisions by

providing clinical performance measures, patient experience data, and Medicare payment and volume information. To access *Hospital Compare* visit www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov. The data information is now available as a complete download at www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov/Download/DownloadDB.asp

Attention Communities: New CVE Application Period Opens September 15th

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) will begin accepting applications for Chartered Value Exchanges on September 15, 2008. CVEs participate in a learning network and have special access to Medicare physician quality measurement results provided by CMS. The application period is open through October 30th. Find the application online at www.ahrq.gov/qual/value/cveapp2008.htm.

Isn't It Time? Declare Your Support.

Learn more online about Value-Driven Health Care (www.hhs.gov/valuedriven) and [sign up today](#) to be a part of the movement toward better health care at lower cost.



"Every American should have access to a full range of information about the quality and cost of their health care options."

Secretary Michael O. Leavitt