



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**HQA To Add New Quality Information To
“Hospital Compare” Website**

WASHINGTON (Monday, July 31, 2006) – Continuing its efforts to make useful hospital quality of care information available to consumers, the Hospital Quality Alliance (HQA) announced today that between 2007 and 2009, it will add to the “Hospital Compare” website (www.HospitalCompare.hhs.gov) information about surgery, asthma in children and ICU care, as well as additional information about heart attack, heart failure and pneumonia.

Hospital Quality Alliance members believe that this website expansion demonstrates the ongoing commitment of the nation's hospitals to share helpful quality information with consumers.

Between 2007 and 2009, hospitals will be asked to provide the following information:

- Patient experience of care data containing consumer insight about nurse and physician performance and responsiveness, hospital cleanliness and noise levels, pain control and discharge planning

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- Mortality rates for heart attack, heart failure and pneumonia patients after hospital admission
- Expanded information on surgical care, including steps taken to prevent blood clots, surgical site infections and post-surgical heart attacks and pneumonia
- Pediatric asthma treatment – the first standardized information specifically regarding children’s care
- Prevention of infections and other complications of care in intensive care and other critical care units.

The HQA believes these measures reflect the most common conditions that patients experience while in a hospital. Some of the new quality measures have been endorsed by the National Quality Forum (NQF) and others will be reviewed and considered for endorsement by NQF, a consensus standards setting body.

The HQA is a public-private collaboration to improve the quality of care provided by the nation’s hospitals by measuring and publicly reporting on that care. The goal of the voluntary program is to collect and report data on a robust set of standardized and easy-to-understand hospital quality measures.

More than 4,000 hospitals – including virtually all acute care hospitals – have voluntarily submitted quality information to share with the public on the initial set of conditions – heart attack, heart failure and pneumonia. The additional information is the next step by the HQA to improve consumer education about quality of care. The HQA is continuing its efforts to determine useful information to include on the Hospital Compare Web site beyond 2009.

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About Hospital Compare

Hospital Compare is the result of the cooperation of members of the Hospital Quality Alliance, a landmark public-private partnership of hospitals, government agencies, quality experts, purchasers, consumer groups and other health care organizations. These organizations have joined together to develop a shared national strategy for hospital quality measurement and are committed to advancing quality of care. The Hospital Quality Alliance created the site – www.HospitalCompare.hhs.gov – to provide quality of care information to the public in a consistent, unified way. The members of the Hospital Quality Alliance are:

AARP

AFL-CIO

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

American Hospital Association

American Medical Association

American Nurses Association

America’s Health Insurance Plans

Association of American Medical Colleges

Blue Cross/Blue Shield Association

Consumer-Purchaser Disclosure Project

Department of Health and Human Services and its Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

Federation of American Hospitals

General Electric

Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)

National Association of Children’s Hospitals and Related Institutions

National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems

National Business Coalition on Health

National Quality Forum (NQF)

U.S. Chamber of Commerce