

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**22 CALIFORNIA HOSPITALS EARN TOP STATUS FOR OUTSTANDING
PATIENT SAFETY & HEALTH CARE QUALITY**

*Aetna, Blue Shield of California, CIGNA HealthCare of California, and UnitedHealthcare
Present High Performing Hospitals First-Time Award, Based on Results of the
Leapfrog Hospital Quality and Safety Survey*

(San Francisco, CA) – Twenty-two hospitals across California have been recognized for their outstanding commitment to health care quality and patient safety with a new award presented by four of the state’s leading health plans—Aetna, Blue Shield of California, CIGNA HealthCare of California, and UnitedHealthcare. The award, “Excellence in Patient Safety & Health Care Quality Award,” is based on results from the Leapfrog Hospital Quality and Safety Survey.

The 22 hospitals are among the top 10 percent of the 216 hospitals statewide responding to the Leapfrog Survey, and hold contracts with three or more of the health plans.ⁱ

Hospitals receiving this recognition earned outstanding scores for instituting or making great strides in achieving the Leapfrog Group’s standards for four measures of hospital quality and safety.ⁱⁱ The four areas of focus are:

- Computer physician order entry—using computers to enter medication orders;
- Evidence-based hospital referral—choosing hospitals with extensive experience and the best results with certain high-risk surgeries and conditions such as coronary artery bypass, abdominal aortic aneurysm repair and high-risk births;
- Intensive care unit (ICU) staffing by physicians experienced in critical care medicine; and,
- The Leapfrog Safe Practices Score—based on the National Quality Forum-endorsed Safe Practices for Better Healthcare—which includes 27 additional practices to reduce preventable medical mistakes.

All award-winning hospitals fully meet the Leapfrog Group’s standard for ICU staffing and the Leapfrog Safe Practices Score. Thirteen of the 22 hospitals meet the standards for at least one of the evidence-based hospital referral practices.

This recognition is part of an effort by health plans to reward and recognize hospitals for their efforts to improve patient safety and the quality of health care.

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“Reward programs work,” said Suzanne Delbanco, CEO, The Leapfrog Group. “Mounting evidence shows that recognizing hospitals for their efforts helps drive improvements in health care, and creates an incentive for other hospitals to improve their patient care.”

This recognition comes at a time when the majority of American health care remains far below obtainable levels of basic safety, quality, and overall customer value. A 1999 report by the Institute of Medicine found that up to 98,000 Americans die every year from preventable medical errors made in hospitals alone. In fact, there are more deaths in hospitals each year from preventable medical mistakes than there are from vehicle accidents, breast cancer, and AIDS.

Each of the award-winning hospitals will be presented with the award by the participating health plans at regional events in May.

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Aetna

Aetna is one of the nation’s leading diversified health care benefits companies, serving approximately 27.9 million unique members with information and resources to help them make better informed decisions about their health care. Aetna offers a broad range of traditional and consumer-directed health insurance products and related services, including medical, pharmacy, dental, behavioral health, group life, long-term care and disability plans, and medical management capabilities. Our customers include employer groups, individuals, college students, part-time and hourly workers, health plans and government-sponsored plans. www.aetna.com

Blue Shield of California

Founded in 1939, Blue Shield of California is one of the state's leading health care companies. Headquartered in San Francisco, the not-for-profit corporation has more than 3.3 million members, 4,500 employees and more than 20 office locations throughout California. Contact your local agent or broker for more information about Blue Shield products and services, or visit the Blue Shield website at www.mylifepath.com.

CIGNA HealthCare of California

CIGNA HealthCare of California offers a wide range of innovative solutions to employers to manage health care costs and outcomes, including its HMO and PPO products, CIGNATURE suite of products, ChoiceFund HSA and other leading consumer directed health care products. With more than 600,000 members, CIGNA HealthCare of California is known for its superior disease management programs and has an "Excellent" accreditation from the National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA). "CIGNA HealthCare" refers to various operating subsidiaries of CIGNA Corporation (NYSE:CI). Products and services are provided by these operating subsidiaries and not by CIGNA Corporation.

The Leapfrog Group

On behalf of the millions of Americans for whom many of the nation’s largest corporations and public agencies buy health benefits, The Leapfrog Group aims to use its members’ collective leverage to initiate breakthrough improvements in the safety, quality, and affordability of health care for Americans. It is a voluntary program aimed at

mobilizing employer purchasing power to alert America's health industry that big leaps in health care safety, quality and customer value will be recognized and rewarded. The Leapfrog Group was founded in November 2000 by the Business Roundtable and has support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, as well as its members and other funders. For more information, visit www.leapfroggroup.org.

UnitedHealthcare

UnitedHealthcare (www.unitedhealthcare.com) provides a full spectrum of consumer-oriented health benefit plans and services, helping more than 24 million individual consumers nationwide achieve improved health and well-being through various health service systems. UnitedHealthcare arranges access to quality, affordable care with more than 500,000 physicians and other care professionals and 4,600 hospitals across America. UnitedHealthcare is one of the businesses of UnitedHealth Group (NYSE:UNH), a diversified Fortune50 health and well-being company.

**California Hospitals Receiving the
Excellence in Patient Safety & Health Care Quality Award 2006**

Hospital	City
Alta Bates Summit Medical Center - Alta Bates Campus	Berkeley, CA
Alvarado Hospital Medical Center/SDRI	San Diego, CA
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center	Los Angeles, CA
Children's Hospital Central California	Madera, CA
Children's Hospital Los Angeles	Los Angeles, CA
Children's Hospital of Orange County	Orange, CA
Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford	Palo Alto, CA
Mercy San Juan Medical Center	Carmichael, CA
Miller Children's Hospital	Long Beach, CA
Mills-Peninsula Health Services	Burlingame, CA
O'Connor Hospital	San Jose, CA
San Ramon Regional Medical Center	San Ramon, CA
Sharp Grossmont Hospital	La Mesa, CA
Sharp Memorial Hospital	San Diego, CA
Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital	Auburn, CA
Sutter General Hospital	Sacramento, CA
Sutter Lakeside Hospital	Lakeport, CA
Sutter Memorial Hospital	Sacramento, CA
Sutter Roseville Medical Center	Roseville, CA
Torrance Memorial Medical Center	Torrance, CA
UCSF Medical Center	San Francisco, CA
UCSF Medical Center / Mount Zion Hospital	San Francisco, CA

*All of these hospitals have ICU intensivists on staff and achieved the highest level on the Leapfrog Safe Practices Score.

ⁱ Only those hospitals that contracted with three or more of the health plans — Aetna, Blue Shield of California, CIGNA HealthCare of California, and UnitedHealthcare — were eligible for this award. Top California hospitals are those fully meeting both the ICU intensivist and the Leapfrog Safe Practices Score. They are ranked according to how many of the five EBHR conditions are met, regardless of which apply.

ⁱⁱ Results are based on December 2005 Leapfrog Survey data.