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DC & BALTIMORE CONSUMERS CAN SOON MAKE BETTER DECISIONS WHEN CHOOSING A LOCAL HOSPITAL

The Leapfrog Group and Local Businesses Collaborate To Survey DC/Baltimore Hospitals on Quality and Safety

WASHINGTON DC, June 5, 2007 - Consumers in the Washington DC and Baltimore metropolitan areas will soon have more information about the quality of local hospitals and be able to make informed health care decisions, according to The Leapfrog Group, an influential, national coalition of major health care purchasers.

The Leapfrog Group has joined forces with a DC/Baltimore collaboration of public and private health care purchasers, health plans and consumer groups that includes Lockheed Martin Corporation, Marriott International, MidAtlantic Business Group on Health, and the Virginia Business Coalition on Health. This group is encouraging local hospitals to participate in the annual Leapfrog Hospital Quality and Safety Survey, a recognized industry standard in hospital quality reporting.

“By encouraging hospitals to adopt key safety practices and arming consumers with information on the quality of hospitals, Leapfrog members – health care purchasers – are helping protect thousands of Americans from disability and death,” said Suzanne Delbanco, PhD, CEO of The Leapfrog Group.

This collaboration with organizations in a specific market area is referred to as a Leapfrog Regional Roll-Out (RRO). The new DC/Baltimore RRO joins 32 other RROs or regions across the country in which local coalitions work to meet Leapfrog goals. Each RRO is committed to reducing the number of patients harmed or killed in hospitals by preventable medical errors.

The DC/Baltimore RRO is urging 46 local hospitals to complete the Leapfrog Survey and share with the public their progress toward implementing four critical quality and safety practices. These practices are proven to reduce preventable medical mistakes that lead to an estimated 98,000 deaths nationally each year.

Survey results will be made public at www.leapfroggroup.org in late June.

“Washington and Baltimore consumers deserve nothing less than the best in safety and quality from our local hospitals. This major push from forward-thinking employers is an important addition to our current efforts to improve health care for consumers,” stated Dr. Jon Shematek, Chief Medical Officer of CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield.

Leapfrog's Survey provides the broadest assessment of a hospital's quality and safety publicly available today. In 2006, Survey results from over 1,300 hospitals (over half of all Americans live within 25 miles of three or more of these hospitals) revealed significant findings about the state of health care quality and safety in the nation's hospitals. For instance, five in ten hospitals did not have a protocol to ensure adequate nursing staff and three in ten lacked a policy to vaccinate their health care workers against the flu.

Collected and analyzed by Thomson Healthcare, the Survey shows a hospital's progress on implementing practices in four categories:

1. **Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE):** Do physicians enter patient prescriptions and other orders into computers linked to error prevention software?
2. **ICU Physician Staffing (IPS):** Are intensive care units staffed by trained ICU specialists (intensivists)?
3. **Evidence-Based Hospital Referral:** How well do hospitals perform five high-risk procedures and care for two high-risk neonatal conditions?
4. **Leapfrog Safe Practices Score:** How well are hospitals progressing on 27 other practices endorsed by the National Quality Forum? For example, does the hospital have a policy to vaccinate their employees against the flu?

If all non-rural hospitals in the U.S. implemented the first three practices, over 65,000 lives per year could be saved and more than 907,000 serious medication errors prevented. Moreover, the U.S. health care system could save approximately \$41.5 billion annually.

The Leapfrog Group (www.leapfroggroup.org). 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. The Leapfrog Group was founded in November 2000 by the Business Roundtable and is supported by its members, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, The Commonwealth Fund, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and other sources.

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