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**MORE HOSPITALS ADOPTING LEAPFROG GROUP'S "NEVER EVENTS" POLICY
WHICH INCLUDES APOLOGIES, REPORTING, AND WAIVING COSTS**

Wide Variation Exists Across States

WASHINGTON, DC, Oct. 27, 2008 - Sixty-three percent of the 1,220 hospitals reporting to the 2008 Leapfrog Hospital Survey indicated they have implemented Leapfrog's Never Events Policy which describes actions hospitals pledge to take whenever a rare medical error -- that should never happen to a patient -- occurs. This is up from 52% of reporting hospitals in 2007, the policy's first year.

Leapfrog's hospital survey data shows that hospitals subscribing to the Never Events policy are twice as likely to have a top tier Leapfrog Safe Practices Score (SPS) than those hospitals that have not adopted the policy.

"Leapfrog's policy is more than just withholding payment for a 'never event'," said Leah Binder, CEO of The Leapfrog Group. "The policy also requires an apology to the patient, a root cause analysis, and public reporting. We want hospitals to take every step humanly possible to show compassion and prevent these events from ever happening again." A copy of the Leapfrog Guidelines on Never Events can be found at the Leapfrog Group website (www.leapfroggroup.org) in the "for hospitals" section.

While there has been an increase nationwide in adoption of Leapfrog's policy, there are wide variations across states that report to Leapfrog. In Arizona, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin less than 35% of reporting hospitals in each state reported implementing the policy. However, in Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, Maine, and Minnesota over 90% of reporting hospitals indicated that they have implemented the policy.

The Leapfrog Group was the first national organization to issue a Never Events Policy, in November of 2006, coinciding with the National Quality Forum's release of its definition of 28 such events. Shortly after, Medicare determined it would not pay for eight Hospital Acquired Conditions, including three never events. Since then, many payers, hospitals, and healthcare advocates have adopted similar policies.

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.

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