

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 15, 2009

Contact:

Kris Deutschman
916-444-8801 or 916-425-7174 (c)
kris@kdcgroup.com

**California Medical Group Survey Indicates Ability of Coordinated Care
Systems to Achieve both Quality and Affordability**

Los Angeles, CA – The California Association of Physician Groups (CAPG) released the results of its third annual Standards of Excellence (SOE) survey of its medical group members. The SOE survey is the first known voluntary large scale, critical self-assessment for medical groups in the United States.

It measures physician group capability in four key elements of patient care:

- Health Information Technology – electronic registries to support chronic care, preventive care, professional communication, and advanced electronic record systems
- Care Management Practices – inpatient and outpatient systems to support physicians and patients to achieve reliability, safety, and affordability
- Accountability and Transparency – participation in measuring and public reporting, including compliance with stringent fiscal responsibility regulations of the State of California
- Patient Centered Care – features to accommodate individualized patient needs and preferences, embracing a responsible role in a culturally diverse community

“The Standards of Excellence initiative represents a focused effort to stimulate local actions to improve patient care and simultaneously provide purchasers of medical services as well as policy makers with real information about the capability and depth of healthcare systems,” said Wells Shoemaker MD, CAPG’s medical director. “Each of the different criteria have been carefully chosen to represent our best current knowledge of services which distinguish “adequate” from “excellent.”

“The data provided by the Standards of Excellence Program offers consumers an excellent tool to help them make informed decisions about their healthcare provider,” said CAPG’s President and CEO Donald Crane. “Most important, the SOE Program can serve as a model standard for other states as our nation’s leaders are considering massive reforms to our healthcare system and are looking to Accountable Care Organizations and coordinated care practices like those successfully pioneered by California’s physician groups.”

The [survey results](#) revealed the following:

- 85 medical groups, which care for more than 10.5 million Californians and 87 percent of the total patient membership for CAPG’s medical groups, participated in the voluntary survey.
- 45 of the responding medical groups -- caring for a population of over 9 million people -- qualified for the “Elite” category, meaning they surpassed a stiff, peer-defined threshold in all four categories.

-more-

- 17 medical groups qualified for “Exemplary” performance, meaning they surpassed the threshold in three of the four categories.

“We achieve affordability by doing the right thing the first time, and this survey tells us that most of our care management systems are built to achieve that,” said Shoemaker.

Shoemaker noted that the results of the SOE survey demonstrate the value for medical groups to deploy centralized health information technology (HIT) and, increasingly, advanced electronic medical record systems within their practices. All of the independent physician associations and medical groups reaching Elite performance have demonstrated leadership and willingness to change old patterns and have invested heavily in computerized tracking, decision support, data mining, and medical records technology.

“While advanced HIT capabilities appear to be necessary to reach Elite status, merely putting a machine in an office will not necessarily do anything,” said Shoemaker. The clinical thinking necessary to serve both large communities as well as unique individuals requires rapid access to all the pertinent information to support good decisions, immediate connectivity with other professionals involved in care, as well as information about services that have been missed or overdue.

“Effective, centralized HIT systems allow individual physicians to review their own performance and take the steps necessary for continuous improvement. Medical groups, unlike small offices, can afford the sophisticated systems, the specialized staff to keep them running, and the population health thinking to use them to the maximum advantage,” said Shoemaker.

####

About the Standards of Excellence Survey: CAPG conducts its Standards of Excellence survey annually among its 150 member medical groups to gain an understanding of their “infrastructure” to offer steadily improving clinical quality, affordability, access, technology, public accountability, and individual responsiveness to their patients. The survey was taken between [month and month], with 85 member physician groups responding. To view the survey results go to: http://www.capg.org/docs/165555172009star_chart_final-revised_7-1-09.pdf

About CAPG: The California Association of Physician Groups (CAPG) is a professional organization comprised of more than 150 of California's leading physician groups. These groups employ and/or contract with physicians who in turn provide health care services to approximately 15 million Californians. More than fifty percent of California's health care is delivered by physicians employed by or contracted with CAPG members. CAPG is committed to improving health care for Californians and supports a progressive and organized system of health care delivery which focuses on coordinated treatment plans and comprehensive coverage, including the most current preventive services and exams. This allows physicians to focus on illness prevention and proactive management of patients in order to maintain their optimum level of health. For more information about CAPG visit: www.capg.org.

####