

# Patient Safety First... a California Partnership for Health



## NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

### **ANTHEM BLUE CROSS PARTNERS WITH CALIFORNIA REGIONAL HOSPITAL ASSOCIATIONS AND THE NATIONAL HEALTH FOUNDATION TO LAUNCH AN HISTORIC THREE-YEAR STATEWIDE PATIENT SAFETY COLLABORATIVE.**

*Groundbreaking collaborative will save lives, improve the quality of care, and reduce spiraling health care costs*

Los Angeles, CA, Jan. 19, 2010 - Anthem Blue Cross, along with California's three regional Hospital Associations, and the National Health Foundation, announced today that they are joining together in a three-year, 6 million dollar effort to improve the quality and consistency of care Californians receive. The Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center hosted the launch of *Patient Safety First... a California Partnership for Health*, a unique relationship that will save lives, improve the quality of medical care and reduce health care costs to make health care more affordable for the people of California.

Leading the collaborative and present at the event were Leslie Margolin, President of Anthem Blue Cross; Art Sponseller, President/CEO, Hospital Council of Northern and Central California; Steve Escoboza, President/CEO, Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties; Jim Barber, President/CEO, Hospital Association of Southern California and Gene Grigsby, President/CEO of the National Health Foundation. Hosting the event was Dr. David Feinberg, CEO of the UCLA Health System. In addition, present and actively supporting the ongoing efforts of the collaborative were representatives from the California March of Dimes leadership team.

The Institute of Medicine reports that as many as 98,000 patients in American hospitals die of avoidable medical errors each year. The human cost of these errors cannot be calculated. The cost to the health care system has been estimated at upwards of 11 billion dollars each year.

While several patient safety and quality initiatives have been undertaken at the individual hospital or system level, the impact has often been limited to the population within that system. This new partnership is unprecedented in its scale and ambition. Hospitals throughout the state of California will be linked in a coordinated effort to improve patient safety through the sharing and implementation of best practices to eliminate hospital acquired infections and improve patient care.

This partnership builds upon established peer-to-peer learning networks like BEACON - The Bay Area Patient Safety Collaborative and the Southern California Patient Safety Collaborative. It also complements the work of the March of Dimes, particularly in the area of perinatal care, prematurity, and teaching women why the last weeks of pregnancy can be critical to the health of the mother and baby.

The three initial areas of focus elected by the collaborative will be:

**Perinatal Care:** Reduction of elective deliveries prior to thirty-nine weeks

**Sepsis:** Reduction of incidence and morbidity

**Hospital Acquired Infections in the ICU Setting:** Reduction of incidence of: (VAP) ventilator-associated pneumonia; (CLBSI) central line blood stream infections, and (CAUTI) catheter associated urinary tract infections

In commenting on the new collaboration Margolin with Anthem Blue Cross stressed, “This is a groundbreaking initiative crossing organizational and geographic boundaries in bold and ambitious ways. Each of us who works in health care recognizes that, to solve the issues we face in providing affordable access to quality care, Health Plans, Hospitals and Physicians must find effective ways of working together. This collaboration around patient safety and the long term opportunity it will provide to share best practices across the medical field is an important example of our ability to work together to improve the lives of Californians by improving the health care we receive. I am very grateful to my partners in the Hospital Associations for their enthusiasm and commitment to this important work.”

Art Sponseller, representing the three Regional Hospital Associations, added: “Our Regional Hospital Associations are delighted to join Anthem Blue Cross and the National Health Foundation in the development of this historic new relationship and partnership. Our hospitals have always focused their mission and vision on providing cost effective and quality health care within the communities they serve. To join in this new partnership with the aim of saving lives, improving the quality of care in a cost effective manner accentuates our common goals. We declare our support and full participation in making this new venture successful and measurably effective in the achievement of these goals. This mutual alignment creates a unique opportunity to positively impact the lives of the patients we all serve.”

The work of *Patient Safety First... a California Partnership for Health* is already underway. Data will be collected from participating hospitals, and benchmarks will be established to enable the success of the program in monitoring and reporting on lives saved, quality outcomes and cost reductions.

### **About Anthem Blue Cross:**

Anthem Blue Cross is the trade name of Blue Cross of California. Anthem Blue Cross and Anthem Blue Cross Life and Health Insurance Company are independent licensees of the Blue Cross Association. ® ANTHEM is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. The Blue Cross names and symbols are registered marks of the Blue Cross Association.

### **About the Regional Hospital Associations:**

The regional hospital associations are not-for-profit 501(c)(6) regional trade associations comprised of hospitals and health systems, related professional associations and associate members with a common interest in improving the operating environment for hospitals and improving the health status of the communities they serve. Combined, the three associations represent 95% of all hospitals in the state. Our mission is to serve the political, economic, informational and educational needs of hospitals in our regions, and improve the quality and accessibility of health care services and thereby improve the health status of communities.

For more information please visit each regional association's website:

Hospital Association of San Diego & Imperial Counties, [www.hasdic.org](http://www.hasdic.org)

Hospital Association of Southern California, [www.hasc.org](http://www.hasc.org)

Hospital Association of Northern and Central California, [www.hospitalcouncil.net](http://www.hospitalcouncil.net)

### **About the National Health Foundation:**

The National Health Foundation (NHF) is an independent, tax exempt 501 (c)(3) public charity dedicated to improving and enhancing the healthcare of the underserved by developing and supporting innovative programs that 1) can become independently viable, 2) provide systematic solutions to gaps in healthcare access and delivery, and 3) have the potential to be replicated nationally.

For more information please visit [www.nhfca.org](http://www.nhfca.org).