



**For Immediate Release
March 20, 2008**

Contact:

Nancy Clarke, Oregon Health Care Quality Corp
503-241-3571
nancy.clarke@q-corp.org
HHS Press Office
(202) 690-6343

Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation Receives Important Designation from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Secretary Leavitt to present the Chartered Value Exchange designation and meet with community leaders during March 20 visit to Portland

Portland, OR – In recognition of the organization's efforts to improve care and physician practices in Oregon, The Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation (Quality Corp) is receiving the Chartered Value Exchange designation from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

HHS is recognizing 14 community-based organizations around the country as the first Chartered Value Exchanges, and Secretary Leavitt will personally recognize Quality Corp during his Portland visit. The organization is being recognized for taking clear actions to convene community purchasers, health plans, providers and consumers to advance value-driven health care.

Specifically, Quality Corp is focused on the following efforts:

- Giving people information that helps them be better partners with their doctors in managing their own health.
- Learning how doctors and hospitals can make improvements in caring for patients.
- Helping purchasers get the information they need in order to buy high value health care.

- Encouraging systems to get patients' information to where it is needed for good care.

"Quality health care happens when doctors, nurses and patients are all on the same team with the same expectations," said Nancy Clarke, Executive Director of the Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation. "Information about cost and quality, provided in the right way, can encourage a much stronger partnership between patients and their provider teams, leading to better health."

The Quality Corp, in addition to other groups receiving the designation, will receive access to Medicare provider performance information for their communities, which can be combined with similarly calculated private-sector results to produce and publish all-payer performance results. The value exchanges will also become part of a nationwide Learning Network through which they can share experiences, best practices, and identify areas where innovation is needed.

"Currently, we don't have a sense of how we are doing in terms of delivering high value health care in Oregon," said Ralph Prows, M.D., Chief Medical Director for Regence and Chairman of Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation. "A cooperative approach to measuring care value – one that focuses on improvement – is the only way this will work. All of us -- doctors, hospitals, health plans, purchasers, patients, government -- can and will do better with good information."

About Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation:

The Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation is a non-profit partnership that brings together physician groups, nurses, hospitals, health plans, purchasers, consumers and policy makers to improve the quality of health care through collaborative leadership. The group focuses on projects that measure and report care quality, align quality improvement assistance to providers, engage consumers in a quality health care system, and foster electronic exchange of health information.

###