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Consumers, Employers and Labor Groups Applaud Medicare for Groundbreaking Physician Voluntary Reporting Program

Washington, DC (November 1, 2005)—A group of the nation's leading consumer, employer and labor organizations – the *Consumer-Purchaser Disclosure Project* – today announced its support of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) new quality reporting system and urged physicians to participate.

"CMS is providing dramatic leadership for Medicare and the entire health care system by fostering rapid adoption of evidence-based physician performance measurement," said Peter Lee, president and CEO of the Pacific Business Group on Health and co-chair of the *Disclosure Project*. "CMS' physician performance program charts the path for standardization of measurement, creates new systems to collect performance information and promotes quality improvement."

CMS' Physician Voluntary Reporting Program announced last Friday launches a program that will collect 36 performance measures, which are an important starting point for reporting on the quality of care being provided to seniors. Performance measures encompass how care is delivered and care outcomes across major diseases like diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis, depression and surgical care. This program benefits physicians who are often burdened by evaluations from numerous sources by creating standardization and new tools to help physicians improve the care they provide.

"The time for uniform performance measurement is now. CMS is supporting doctors in obtaining credible, comparative data they can trust," said Debra Ness, president of the National Partnership for Women & Families and *Disclosure Project* co-chair. "Doctors who join the program can be at the forefront of an important new chapter in our health care system where quality, not volume, is rewarded."

The *Disclosure Project* recognizes that collaboration among various stakeholders is critical to make the information providers and patients need as valid and reliable as possible. CMS' Physician Voluntary Reporting Program is part of a growing array of performance-based quality initiatives that this Administration is embarking on within their existing authority. At the same time, there continues to be appropriate discussion of potential needs to expand the scope of what CMS can do through federal legislation.

For more information on CMS' program go to www.cms.hhs.gov/media/press/release.asp?Counter=1699

About the Disclosure Project (www.healthcaaredisclosure.org)

The Consumer-Purchaser Disclosure Project is a group of leading employer, consumer, and labor organizations working toward a common goal to ensure that all Americans have access to publicly reported health care performance information. The Disclosure Project is supported by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Leapfrog Group.

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