



THE HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT FOUNDATION
Building Partnerships For Better Health Care

For more information:

Kate Flynn

(215) 575-2444

kflynn@hcfonline.org

Pennsylvania Health Care Quality Alliance, Health Care Improvement Foundation Complete Merger

Strategic Combination Will Strengthen Regional and Statewide Quality Improvement Capabilities.

HARRISBURG, PA and PHILADELPHIA, PA (January 8th, 2015) – The Health Care Improvement Foundation (HCIF) and the Pennsylvania Health Care Quality Alliance (PHCQA) announced today that their organizations have merged. HCIF and PHCQA concluded that combining their core strengths will better achieve their companies' complementary objectives of improving health care quality in Pennsylvania. As part of the agreement, PHCQA will merge into HCIF but continue its statewide transparency initiatives and maintain its public reporting website, www.phcqa.org, which reports health care performance data for Pennsylvania hospitals, patient-centered medical homes, and cancer centers. The merger officially went into effect on January 1, 2015.

“This combination will bring the measurement and analytical capabilities of PHCQA together with the highly experienced quality improvement and program management staff of HCIF,” stated Erik Muther, Executive Director of PHCQA. “While the merger helps to solidify the sustainability of the PHCQA website, HCIF will be able to leverage PHCQA’s data platform, content expertise and web portals for local and statewide quality improvement.”

HCIF is a Philadelphia-based nonprofit organization that focuses on improving the safety, outcomes, and care experiences of all patients, residents and consumers by leading regionally-focused health care initiatives. Originally founded in 1980 as an affiliate of the Delaware Valley Healthcare Council of the Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP), HCIF has operated as an independent, multi-stakeholder organization since 2003.

PHCQA was established in 2006 by HAP, the Pennsylvania Medical Society, and the state’s four Blue Cross Plans. PHCQA is focused on improving the quality of patient health by endorsing statewide quality measurement standards and promoting the responsible public reporting of unbiased and ‘user-friendly’ health care information. The reported measures provide patients with the necessary information to make educated health care decisions and encourage providers to deliver higher quality of care.

“The merger will enhance HCIF/PHCQA’s position as a robust resource for healthcare quality improvement initiatives and reporting across the entire Commonwealth. We are very pleased to have PHCQA joining with HCIF,” said Frank J. Trembulak, Executive Vice President, Geisinger Health System and the Immediate Past Chair of PHCQA.

“We are very excited to welcome PHCQA, and endorse PHCQA’s longstanding commitment to health care data transparency,” said Kate Flynn, President of HCIF. “The measurement expertise of Erik Muther and the PHCQA staff will be an invaluable resource for our ongoing and future projects.”



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HCIF has collaborated with PHCQA on various quality improvement initiatives since 2008. Most recently, PHCQA and HCIF collaborated as partners with the HAP-led Pennsylvania Hospital Engagement Network (PA-HEN). This 3-year federal Partnership for Patients program run by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) achieved goals of reducing preventable harm by 40 percent and readmissions by 20 percent in participating hospitals across the state. PHCQA and HCIF also recently announced the establishment of a collaborative in central Pennsylvania funded by Capital Blue Cross to spread the benefits of palliative care and raise awareness of the Pennsylvania Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) form.

“The consolidation of HCIF and PHCQA represents a unique opportunity to blend and enhance the complementary strengths of two successful Pennsylvania-based quality improvement organizations,” said Patrick J. Brennan, M.D., Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer of the University of Pennsylvania Health System, and the Chairman of HCIF.

HCIF and PHCQA have a history of utilizing a multi-stakeholder approach to identify and implement best practices to improve health care for all Pennsylvanians. This merger will allow the two organizations to combine their expertise in order to achieve their shared goal of initiating innovative and effective improvements in Pennsylvania’s health care delivery system.

About The Health Care Improvement Foundation (HCIF)

The Health Care Improvement Foundation is an independent nonprofit organization that leads health care initiatives aimed at improving the safety, outcomes, and care experiences of all patients with the hopes of facilitating the development of a high-performing health care delivery system demonstrating enhanced measures of safety, quality, and effectiveness. More information about the HCIF can be found at www.hcifonline.org.

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