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Kansas joins collaborative network to support large-scale health care transformation among clinician practices

Topeka, Kan. -- Clinicians across Kansas now have new resources to support improved quality and outcomes for patients. Kansas is included in the Iowa Healthcare Collaborative's (IHC) proposal that earned one of 39 Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative awards announced September 29 by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

The IHC and its partners, operating as the Compass Practice Transformation Network (PTN), will receive up to \$32.5 million during the four-year initiative to help equip up to 7,000 clinicians in six states – Iowa, Kansas, Georgia, Nebraska, Oklahoma and South Dakota -- with tools, information, and network support needed to improve quality of care, increase patients' access to information, and spend health care dollars more wisely.

In Kansas, the project will be led by the Kansas Healthcare Collaborative, the Topeka-based quality organization founded by the Kansas Hospital Association and the Kansas Medical Society. Recruitment of practices is already underway.

"More than 1,000 Kansas clinicians are expected to participate in the effort that will expand their quality improvement capacity, learn from one another, and achieve the goals of improved care, better health, and reduced cost," said Jerry Slaughter, executive director of the Kansas Medical Society. "This is an incredible opportunity for physicians to prepare for the transformation from fee for service-based payment to one that is performance-based."

The network will provide direct quality improvement support in primary and specialty clinical practice settings to equip clinicians in executing best-practice medicine, engaging patients as equal partners in their care. In driving real-time, measureable improvement strategies, Compass PTN will help participating clinicians meet the initiative's phases of transformation and associated milestones, clinical and operational results.

"Supporting doctors and other health care professionals change the way they work is critical to improving quality and spending our health care dollars more wisely," said HHS Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell during the announcement. "These awards will give patients more of the information they need to make informed decisions about their care and give clinicians access to information and support to improve care coordination and quality outcomes."

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These awards are part of a comprehensive strategy advanced by the Affordable Care Act that enables new levels of coordination, continuity, and integration of care, while transitioning volume-driven systems to value-based, patient-centered, health care services. It builds upon successful models and programs such as the Hospital Value-Based Purchasing Organization Program, Partnership for Patients with Hospital Engagement Networks, and Accountable Care Organizations.

KHC is a provider-led 501(c)3 organization with a mission to transform health care through patient-centered initiatives that improve quality, safety and value. Founded in 2008 by the Kansas Hospital Association and the Kansas Medical Society, KHC embodies the commitment of two of the state's leading health care provider groups to act as a resource and continuously enhance the quality of care provided to Kansans. For more information about the Kansas Healthcare Collaborative and its initiatives, visit www.khconline.org.

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Additional links:

<http://innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/Transforming-Clinical-Practices/>

<http://www.ihconline.org.aspx/newsdetail.aspx?nid=94>