

News Release



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Ken Johnson
Senior Vice President

PhRMA Statement on Quality in Health Care

Washington, D.C. (March 24, 2009) — Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) Senior Vice President Ken Johnson released the following statement today about a new report entitled, ‘Building a Foundation for High Quality, Affordable Health Care: Linking Performance Measurement to Health Reform’ issued today by a group of organizations called Stand for Quality:

“PhRMA supports a strong focus on quality of care as a foundation of healthcare reform. We welcome Stand for Quality’s recommendations about how to improve healthcare performance measurement and reporting. We agree that these efforts should build on existing public-private partnerships, and that properly constructed health information technology can help drive measurement and reporting.

“PhRMA is committed to strengthening our healthcare system, with a primary focus on assuring access to affordable healthcare coverage for all Americans and improving value and quality. Our ‘Platform for a Healthy America,’ which we unveiled last year, is built around these central themes.

“Among its proposals, the platform supports: encouraging the use of evidence-based medicine to help close the gap between care known to be effective and care patients receive; improving care coordination and disease management for the millions of Americans who suffer from chronic conditions; and enhancing transparency of quality and cost information.

“Stand for Quality points toward the right way to achieve sustainable savings on health care. Improving outcomes – such as catching chronic illnesses early and treating them properly to avoid costly complications – goes hand in hand with greater efficiency. Today, patients too often experience poor outcomes, employers experience lost productivity, and we all pay large health costs that could have been avoided. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, patients with chronic diseases account for 75 cents out of every healthcare dollar spent, thus focusing on improving health outcomes can help control rising healthcare costs. Stand for Quality’s recommendations make an important contribution to addressing this problem.

“Focusing on quality improvement rather than restricting access to beneficial care is the right way to improve health care outcomes and affordability. And patients and payers alike will benefit from a system that more strongly supports clinicians in delivering

quality care and in tailoring evidence-based treatments to the needs of individual patients. Performance measures related to healthcare value must reflect differences in patient needs by giving providers and patients the flexibility to tailor care so it is of the highest value to the individual patient.

“Much work remains in developing a quality improvement agenda. For instance, the way health care is organized and managed has a large effect on whether patients receive the right care at the right time. This points to the importance of quality measurement and improvement at the systems of care level, not just at the provider level. Similarly, measures of the cost of care need to be closely linked to quality and outcomes across episodes of illness. And care is not static — medical advances are achieving significant progress against conditions like heart disease and cancer. Personalized care offers new ways of improving quality. Quality measurement will need to account for these changes.

“America’s pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies contribute to higher quality care, improved health outcomes and the quality enterprise – and we are committed to building on these efforts. We look forward to working with Stand for Quality.”

The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) represents the country’s leading pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies, which are devoted to inventing medicines that allow patients to live longer, healthier, and more productive lives. PhRMA companies are leading the way in the search for new cures. PhRMA members alone invested an estimated \$50.3 billion in 2008 in discovering and developing new medicines. Industry-wide research and investment reached a record \$65.2 billion in 2008.

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