

NEWS RELEASE

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OHIO BUSINESS, HEALTH CARE LEADERS JOIN TOGETHER TO IMPROVE PATIENT SAFETY, REDUCE COSTS IN OHIO HOSPITALS

*New Solutions for Patient Safety partnership aims to reduce
health care-associated infections, medication errors in state*

COLUMBUS, Ohio – For the first time in Ohio’s history, business leaders and health care providers are teaming up in a statewide effort to make Ohio the safest place in the nation for health care.

The Cardinal Health Foundation, the Ohio Business Roundtable, the Central Ohio Hospital Council, the Ohio Hospital Association and the Ohio Children’s Hospital Association today announced the formation of *Solutions for Patient Safety*, a unique collaboration to improve quality and reduce costs of health care statewide.

Each hospital involved in the partnership, which is initially funded by a \$1.5 million investment from the Cardinal Health Foundation, will implement specific programs to reduce health care-associated infections (HAIs) and medication errors. The hospitals will share information within and across institutions, and will then work to replicate best practices and outcomes with providers in Ohio and nationwide.

“One of the keys to driving a meaningful reduction in the cost of care is improving the quality of care,” said R. Kerry Clark, chairman and CEO of Cardinal Health. “It’s clear that reducing HAIs and medication errors represents a great challenge and a great opportunity to drive measurable improvements in patient safety while reducing overall health care costs.”

For more than 10 years, statewide and regional efforts to improve quality and patient safety have been underway and yielding substantial results, including the work of the Ohio Children’s Hospital Association’s Quality Improvement Collaborative and the Ohio Hospital Association’s award-winning quality improvement efforts. This partnership will take these efforts to a new level by creating opportunities to build quality improvement systems within and across institutions that will make a positive impact on patient care for years to come.

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Solutions for Patient Safety's first initiative will include 16 Central Ohio hospitals and Ohio's eight children's hospitals. The Central Ohio hospitals will focus on two specific goals – reducing catheter-associated blood borne infections and reducing health care-associated methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) infections. Simultaneously, Ohio's children's hospitals will work to reduce surgical site infection rates for cardiac, neurosurgery, and orthopedic procedures and to eliminate harm or death to any child due to medication errors.

“Through Solutions for Patient Safety, my peer leaders and I are pledging our engagement and support to truly promoting a cultural shift at our institutions – to make patient safety an integral, uncompromised component of our cultures,” said James M. Anderson, president and CEO, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. “We are coming together today to demonstrate that this is not just about a one-time initiative. It's about making Ohio the safest, best place in the nation for care – and we stand here today committed to this aspiration.”

The partnership plans to share preliminary results of its first initiative in fall 2009, with additional reports issued as further achievements are made and new initiatives are identified.

“Ohio is blessed to have some of the finest hospitals and health care companies in the country,” said Governor Ted Strickland. “And, I'm proud that they are taking this courageous step to join forces to improve patient safety. I believe this effort can be a key factor in improving the quality of care in our state while also helping to curb the rising cost of health care here in Ohio and across the nation. My administration just recently hosted a successful summit on improving health care quality and we look forward to this opportunity to share ideas with those working on this important issue.”

Business and health care leaders, policy makers and patients wanting to learn more about how to get involved in Solutions for Patient Safety's efforts to make Ohio the safest place for health care in the nation may go to www.SolutionsforPatientSafety.org or contact Jessie Cannon at 614-469-1044 or jcannon@ohiobrt.com.

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