

## **Hospitals Announce Participation in Patient Safety Organization** *Rhode Island Once Again Leads the Nation in Quality Improvement Project*

Providence, R.I. – February 10, 2011 – Hospitals in Rhode Island are once again leading the nation in the latest quality improvement and patient safety initiative. All private acute care hospitals in the state will participate in the GE Healthcare National Patient Safety Organization (PSO). Rhode Island is the first state to have unanimous participation of private acute care hospitals in a single PSO.

By providing both privilege and confidentiality, PSOs create a secure environment where hospitals can collect, aggregate, and analyze data that enable the identification and reduction of risks and hazards associated with patient care. Hospitals will voluntarily report and share quality and patient safety information with the PSO. The analysis of this data will assist hospitals in improving care by learning from the experiences of their peers and fostering an environment for open dialogue.

The GE Healthcare National Patient Safety Organization, one of the largest organizations of its kind in the nation, was recently certified by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Implementation has begun at local hospitals and is expected to be completed the coming months.

“Participation in the GE Healthcare National Patient Safety Organization is another example of hospitals’ commitment and dedication to further improving patient care in our state,” said Edward J. Quinlan, president of the Hospital Association of Rhode Island. “Hospitals will use the PSO to collect and analyze data about medical errors and ‘good catches.’ Data collected will aid health care providers in better understanding why some errors occur.”

“We applaud Rhode Island for creating a culture that supports medical event reporting as a means to improve patient care,” said Scott Foster, Managing Principal of GE Healthcare. “At GE, we believe that change will only come when hospitals are better able to collect, detect, understand and mitigate the risk of error.”

“Rhode Island's hospitals have long led in the national effort to reduce medical errors, but we can always do better, and I'm proud that Rhode Island's health care community is once again leading the fight to ensure safe, high quality care,” said Senator Sheldon Whitehouse.

“Medical errors are an issue that demands a forceful response, and I am pleased our state’s hospitals will be at the forefront of this comprehensive, data-driven approach to improving patient safety,” said U.S. Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), who helped Congress establish PSOs in 2005 and has been a strong supporter of this initiative.

“The ultimate goal of the PSO is to create a safe, efficient, and cost-effective system for providing the best patient care. By participating in this organization through which we can learn from our mistakes and prevent medical errors, Rhode Island hospitals are taking an important step toward protecting the public's health and improving healthcare delivery”, said David R. Gifford, MD, MPH, Director, Rhode Island Department of Health.

*Founded over a half century ago, the Hospital Association of Rhode Island is a statewide trade organization that assists member hospitals in effectively meeting the health care needs of Rhode Island, through advocacy, representation, education and services. HARI members work collaboratively to improve the quality of care delivered and address issues threatening access to health care including increasing health costs, workforce shortages and decreasing reimbursement. HARI members work together to ensure that all Rhode Islanders will receive comprehensive, high quality health care.*

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