



For Immediate Release – March 30, 2009

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Multi-Stakeholder Approach Makes Health Care Payment Reform Summit A Success

Portland, OR — The Oregon Coalition of Health Care Purchasers and the Oregon Medical Association hosted the Healthcare Payment Reform Summit on March 26, bringing together physicians, purchasers, health plan executives, hospital leaders, and policy makers to identify ways to improve the current health care payment system.

Nearly 100 people gathered for the daylong event, including Dale Johnson, OCHCP Board Chair and Vice President of Corporate Human Resources for Blount International as well as Monica Wehby, M.D., OMA President, to collaboratively discuss payment reform and an implementation plan for alternative payment recommendations.

“The present system compensates physicians for visits and procedures but does not provide compensation for some of the education, consultation and care coordination that is necessary to maximize prevention and treatment” according to Barbara Prowe, OCHCP Executive Director.

Harold Miller, President of the Network for Regional Healthcare Improvement, set the stage through a presentation of various health care payment alternatives such as episode of care payment and condition-adjusted capitation.

Workgroups were also assembled to discuss and provide recommendations on medical homes for chronic disease patients; medical homes for family wellness and prevention; diagnosing and treating back pain more efficiently; and controlling the cost of heart surgery. By early afternoon, the workgroups developed recommendations that were voted upon by all participants.

There was majority support for the funding of medical homes, for coordinating a common approach across multiple health insurance plans for the changes, engaging leaders from multiple organizations in the process, and maintaining collaboration moving forward. However, challenges remain in terms of details and implementation.

Jo Bryson, OMA Executive Director, stated that she heard many positive comments from the participants throughout the process. “This event definitely demonstrated that when all interested parties are brought to the table, creative solutions are made.”

“The votes demonstrate that participants are committed to implementing new payment methodologies and OCHCP is committed to ensuring that happens” stated Prowe in her closing comments.

The Oregon Coalition of Health Care Purchasers’ Mission is to use the collective voice of purchasers to drive toward a high value health care system; to improve purchasers’ ability to contract for high quality and cost-effective health care for their employees/members; and to help purchasers steer their employees/members toward optimal health. Additional information can be found at www.ochcp.org.

The Oregon Medical Association is an organization of over 7,500 physicians, physician assistants, and medical students organized to serve and support physicians in their efforts to improve the health of Oregonians. Additional information can be found at www.theOMA.org.

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Monica Wehby, M.D.
President
Oregon Medical Association
11740 SW 68th Pkwy, Suite 100
Portland, OR 97223

Dear Dr. Wehby,

I cannot thank The Oregon Medical Association enough for all of the assistance provided to make the March 26th Healthcare Payment Reform Summit a success.

The use of the lovely Oregon Medical Education Foundation Conference Center worked very well. I have never worked with such a thoughtful, efficient staff. Ron and Nathan were exceptional in offering ideas and anticipating the needs of the participants.

Insights offered by Joy Conklin and Courtni Dresser in preparation of the Summit were most helpful.

A key goal for the Summit was to expand the payment reform dialogue more broadly into the physician community. Involvement of the OMA staff enabled us to achieve that goal.

The evaluations are primarily positive.
There is strong interest in moving forward on reform efforts.

Forty percent of the Summit participants were physicians that are not health plan staff. Many of them stayed for the entire day which is strong testimony of their interest in this issue.

Thank you very much.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barbara Prowe
Executive Director
Oregon Coalition of Health Care Purchasers (OCHCP)
812 SW Tenth Ave., Suite 204
Portland, OR 97205

cc: Jo Bryson; Joy Conklin; Courtni Dresser