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PRESS RELEASE

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BUILDING A SAFER HEALTH SYSTEM

The Kentucky Hospital Association Creates a Patient Safety Organization to Improve Safety through the Collection and Analysis of Data on Patient Events

LOUISVILLE – Effective November 26, the first Kentucky organization solely dedicated to studying medical errors – why they occur and how to prevent them – was established under a new federal program. The Kentucky Institute for Patient Safety and Quality joins only nineteen other organizations across the country that are currently approved to use this new federal program. This is the day that the Kentucky Institute for Patient Safety and Quality will be federally designated by the Secretary of Health and Human Services as a Patient Safety Organization (PSO).

The Institute was established by the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) as a new organization whose mission is dedicated to quality and patient safety activities to improve the delivery of health care to every Kentuckian. Based in Louisville, it will have a multidisciplinary governing board of representatives from hospitals, physicians, nurses, consumers, and the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization for Kentucky.

The federal designation as a PSO will, for the first time, allow Kentucky's health care providers to confidentially report information on adverse patient events, near misses, and best practices without fear of blame. The Institute will analyze reported data to begin answering questions about the safety of health care in Kentucky and help health care providers take steps to prevent future errors from occurring. The data collected in Kentucky will also be part of a national database compiled by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) for national trending and information sharing among all PSOs throughout the country.

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“Until now, there was no system like this in Kentucky. Before, Kentucky hospitals could only review problems individually within their institutions, and did not systematically collect, nor share such data because confidentiality could not be maintained,” said KHA President Mike Rust. “KHA developed a PSO to help hospitals fulfill their mission of providing the highest quality of care to their patients. Knowing when and why medical errors happen in Kentucky is the first step towards making real progress in preventing them.”

Following the release of The Institute of Medicine (IOM) report which identified a need to capture data to improve the safety of health care delivery, Congress passed The Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005 authorizing the creation of Patient Safety Organizations (PSOs) for the voluntary collection and analysis of data on adverse events.

Although participation in the new Kentucky PSO is voluntary, KHA hopes that all Kentucky hospitals will join. Because all Kentucky hospitals are members of KHA, the Institute’s first priority is to achieve participation by hospitals. At a later date, participation in the PSO will be open to other health care facilities and providers.

About KHA

The Kentucky Hospital Association is a not-for-profit trade association of health care provider organizations that are committed to health improvement in their communities. KHA is the statewide advocate for its members, which include nearly 125 hospitals, health care systems, networks and other providers of care. Founded in 1929, KHA provides education for health care leaders, is a source of information on health care issues and is a provider of hospital quality and pricing data.

About the Kentucky PSO

The Kentucky Institute for Patient Safety and Quality is a non-profit subsidiary of KHA focusing on the statewide collection and analysis of adverse patient event data from health care providers and the dissemination of recommendations for improvement in care delivery. Based in Louisville, the mission of the Institute is to improve health care quality and patient safety through the dissemination of best practices and reliable, useful information, to foster a culture of safety and provide a learning environment for persons engaged in the delivery of health care services.