



**For Immediate Release**  
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### **OREGON TAKES ACTION TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE**

*Quality Corp joins Dr. Oz, RWJF, U.S. health agencies in highlighting growing movement to improve quality of care*

**Portland, Ore. (Sept. 15, 2011)** – The Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation convened health care leaders and stakeholders today to collaborate on efforts to improve the quality and affordability of health care for all Oregonians.

The convening is part of a national initiative aimed at helping Americans identify and get better health care. Quality Corp joined TV's Dr. Mehmet Oz, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and other organizations across the country to celebrate the *Care About Your Care* initiative, a month-long effort in September to spark conversation and galvanize attention about the uneven quality of U.S. health care.

Despite spending more per person on care than any other country, some people still don't get the care they should, like cancer screenings, immunizations, or – for those with diabetes – regular eye and foot care. Some get care they shouldn't – care that's wasteful and exposes them to potential harm, like unnecessary CAT scans or x-rays. And sadly some people simply get care that can harm them with preventable medical errors killing an estimated 98,000 Americans each year.

"We're proud to be a part of this national movement to improve quality, transparency and affordability in health care," said Mylia Christensen, executive director of the Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation. "When patients are informed and involved, they get better care. Through this effort we hope Oregonians will recognize the powerful role they can play in getting quality health care for themselves and their families."

Today's convening brought together the many people and organizations that have supported Quality Corp's work to improve health care in Oregon. In addition to the 25 members of Quality Corp's Board of Directors, over 100 volunteers have served on the organization's various committees. Quality Corp's convening provided an opportunity to celebrate shared accomplishments over the past 10 years and discuss new programs to improve care for low back pain, reduce readmissions for congestive heart failure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and measure and report on the patient experience of care in Oregon.

In conjunction with Quality Corp, health care leaders across the country joined the conversation today at simultaneous events to talk about ways to improve health care quality and offer tips to help people identify and receive good care.

“People need to understand that the quality of health care varies widely across the nation – even within communities – and there are things they can do to ensure they and their loved ones get the best care possible,” said Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, M.D., M.B.A., president and CEO of RWJF. “The right fit could mean better health and a better relationship with their doctor. At the same time, it is critical that we all do our part as patients to take responsibility for our own health and care, like learning more about our illnesses, taking care of ourselves and following recommendations from our doctors and nurses.”

The health leaders, backed by a broad range of groups, including the American College of Physicians, AARP, American Nurses Association, America’s Health Insurance Plans and others, urged American health care consumers to do three things:

1. Look for the right care for you and your family. Find the doctors and hospitals that are the best fit for you.
2. Learn what quality care is and what’s being done to improve health care in America and in your community.
3. Live better by caring about your care – confident in your relationships with health care providers, doing all you can do for your health.

A central component of the month-long effort is a new website, [CareAboutYourCare.org](http://CareAboutYourCare.org), which includes easy-to-use resources to help people better understand what quality care is, how they can find out more about doctors and hospitals in their community and how to be more engaged as a patient. Among the resources is a list of “9 Things You Can Do to Get Better Care.”

“Americans should be as prepared for a doctor’s appointment as they would be to buy a new computer or TV,” Dr. Oz said. “When you go to your doctor, be ready with a list of questions and a record of all medications. Take a family member to appointments so you don’t miss anything and, if possible, have one doctor or nurse coordinating all your care.”

The Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation is part of *Aligning Forces for Quality*, RWJF’s signature program to lift the quality of care in 16 communities and provide models for reform. Quality Corp manages a website, [PartnerforQualityCare.org](http://PartnerforQualityCare.org), to help Oregonians become better partners in their health care. The website includes tips for getting high-quality care and quality scores for doctors’ offices and hospitals in Oregon.

Other *Care About Your Care* participants are part of HHS’s Beacon Community Cooperative Agreement program and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality’s Chartered Value Exchange program.

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#### **NOTE TO EDITORS:**

Tools for consumers can be downloaded at [CareAboutYourCare.org](http://CareAboutYourCare.org), including:

- 10 Things You Need to Know About Quality of Health Care in America
- 9 Things You Can Do to Get Better Care
- National Directory of Hospital and Physician Performance Reports
- How to Use Reports on Physician and Hospital Performance

#### **About the Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation**

*The Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality and affordability of health care in Oregon by leading community collaborations and producing unbiased information. We work with the members of our community – including consumers, providers, employers, policymakers and health insurers – to improve health care for all Oregonians. For more information, visit [www.g-corp.org](http://www.g-corp.org). For health care information for Oregonians, visit [www.PartnerforQualityCare.org](http://www.PartnerforQualityCare.org).*