

# STAND FOR QUALITY

*in Health Care*

August 19, 2009

Re: Support and Appreciation for Assuring Quality Focus in Health Reform

Dear Senator Feinstein,

As members of the Steering Committee of Stand for Quality, we would like to thank you for supporting quality improvement efforts in the health care reform work to date. While the debate can be heated at times, we're encouraged that a wide range of stakeholders have found common ground in recognizing the importance of the quality enterprise.

Earlier this year, Stand for Quality identified several functions key to quality improvement, including setting national priorities, providing for the input and consultation of multi-stakeholder groups, and developing, collecting and using measures to assure Americans receive high-quality care. More than 200 organizations now support these functions, many of which are already reflected in varying degrees in the legislation now being considered in Congress. We support health care reform and believe meaningful reform should include the Stand for Quality recommendations to provide for an effective quality enterprise. We wanted you to know about these efforts and why we believe they are important:

- Growing Momentum for Quality: Components of Stand for Quality's recommendations have been incorporated into the bills being considered by the House of Representatives and the Senate.
- National Priorities & Multi-Stakeholder Input Processes: Legislation so far includes provisions for assuring the Health and Human Services Secretary sets national priorities and goals. Engaging multi-stakeholders in partnership with the federal government in setting these priorities and determining their use early in the decision-making process ensures the inclusion of well-vetted and representative viewpoints from across the spectrum.
- Measurement and Improvement: Focusing on national priorities helps identify areas where measures that guide care are most needed. We need measures developed in a range of areas, such as functional status, outcomes and resource use. And, we need the systems in place to collect these measures efficiently across both the public and private systems to drive rapid and sustained improvement. Measurement also allows us to track our progress – and make adjustments in our work as needed.
- Quality Over Quantity: The quality enterprise can lead us to a system that rewards quality of care rather than quantity of care. Reform should provide resources for the development and dissemination of innovative methodologies and strategies to improve care delivery, so clinicians and other providers can have the incentives and game-changing tools they need to improve practice at the point of care.
- Building on What Works: So much of the work critical to the success of the quality enterprise is already underway. By engaging and supporting robust public-private partnerships, we can solidify the foundation of a quality enterprise that will strengthen health care quality – not only expanding coverage, but also ensuring patients receive quality, affordable care.

The more than 200 organizations supporting Stand for Quality are committed to ensuring that health reform is about improving quality and affordability. Measuring performance is one of the important tools that can be used to drive quality improvement. The quality enterprise framework we're supporting is an essential foundation for making sure reform is about delivering better care to all Americans.

Again, thank you for recognizing the importance of quality – your support brings us one step closer to a health care system that can deliver safer, more affordable care to more Americans. The Stand for Quality recommendations, and a complete list of endorsing organizations, can be found at [www.standforquality.org](http://www.standforquality.org).

Sincerely,

The Stand for Quality Steering Committee

**Janet M. Corrigan**, Ph.D., M.B.A., President and Chief Executive Officer, National Quality Forum

**Rita Munley Gallagher**, Ph.D., R.N., Senior Policy Fellow, American Nurses Association

**Karen Ignagni**, M.B.A., President and Chief Executive Officer, America's Health Insurance Plans

**Charles N. Kahn III**, M.P.H., President, Federation of American Hospitals

**Peter V. Lee**, J.D., Executive Director for National Health Policy, Pacific Business Group on Health

**Mark B. McClellan**, M.D., Ph.D., Director, Engelberg Center for Health Care Reform at the Brookings Institution and Leonard D. Schaeffer Chair in Health Policy Studies

**Debra L. Ness**, President, National Partnership for Women & Families

**Nancy H. Nielsen**, M.D., Ph.D., Immediate Past President, American Medical Association

**Kenneth W. Porter**, Senior Vice President, American Benefits Council

**William L. Roper**, M.D., M.P.H., Dean, UNC School of Medicine, Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs and CEO, UNC Healthcare System (Chair, National Quality Forum)

**John C. Rother**, Executive Vice President, Policy and Strategy, AARP

**Gerald M. Shea**, Assistant to the President for Governmental Affairs, AFL-CIO

**John Tooker**, M.D., M.B.A., F.A.C.P., Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer, American College of Physicians