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BRIDGES TO EXCELLENCE AND HEALTHGRADES PARTNER

-- Employers, Physicians, and Consumers to Benefit from Partnership of Pay-for-Performance Initiative and Healthcare Ratings Leader --

GOLDEN, Colo. and WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 8, 2006) – Physician pay-for-performance leader Bridges to Excellence (BTE) and HealthGrades, the leading healthcare ratings company, jointly announced a broad partnership today to provide consumers with information to make better healthcare choices.

Under the agreement, which began November 1, physicians with BTE certifications for delivering high-quality care will have their certifications visible to the more than 2.5 million consumers utilizing HealthGrades.com on a monthly basis. BTE certifications will also be made available to the millions of employees and health plan members with access to HealthGrades' Health Management Suite, an online application in use by hundreds of major employers, health plans and third-party administrators.

In addition, physicians and physician practices that participate in BTE's pay-for-performance program will be able to customize the information visible to potential patients, providing an expanded profile with in-depth detail about their practice. This password-protected online service lets physicians maintain and update their profiles and view their patient counts that impact BTE compensation.

“We are proud to be partnering with HealthGrades to further our organizations' mutual goals of improving healthcare quality and providing consumers with comparative information to choose healthcare providers in a smarter way,” said Francois de Brantes, the national coordinator of Bridges to Excellence. “This partnership increases the demand for quality physicians by ensuring that the users of HealthGrades, the leading online destination for consumers selecting physicians, see that certain physicians are committing themselves to better care by earning BTE certifications. But it also changes the supply of quality physicians, as we expect more physicians to become part of BTE as a result of this partnership. With high-quality physicians increasing in both demand and supply, we'll see how activated consumers can stimulate the improvement of quality care in this country.”

More than 75 major employers, including IBM, Honeywell, Procter & Gamble, Verizon, Raytheon, EMC, Cisco, GE, UPS, Hannaford Brothers and Carlson Companies, currently participate in BTE. These employers recognize and reward physicians who demonstrate that they deliver safe, timely, effective and patient-centered care to their employees and dependents of their employees. There are three BTE programs under which physicians can achieve certification: Physician Office Link, Cardiac Care Link, and Diabetes Care Link. In 2007, three additional programs will be introduced: Spine Care Link, Internal Medicine Care Link and Cancer Care Link.

“Employers participating in Bridges to Excellence recognize and reward physician excellence,” said Nancy Brock, HealthGrades’ Senior Vice President for Strategic Health Solutions. “It’s important for employees and consumers to learn about the outstanding care provided by physicians, whether it’s for a single procedure or a chronic condition such as diabetes or cardiac care. HealthGrades’ facilitates this process for doctors, highlighting quality physicians to millions of employees and consumers who use HealthGrades to search for healthcare providers.”

The partnership allows employers that participate in BTE to provide their employees with access to HealthGrades’ public ratings information, and also offers BTE employers access to HealthGrades Health Management Suite at a discounted rate. The Health Management Suite is a complete set of personal health-management tools that feature HealthGrades’ industry-leading hospital ratings and physician profiles, a medical cost calculator and health-optimization tools that include preventive care information, condition centers, a drug checker and decision-support tools.

About Bridges to Excellence

Bridges to Excellence (BTE) is a non-profit coalition-based organization created to encourage significant leaps in the quality of care by recognizing and rewarding health care providers who demonstrate that they deliver safe, timely, effective, and patient-centered care. BTE works with large employers, health plans, providers and a wide range of organizations that have a shared goal of improving quality and patient outcomes. For more information, go to www.bridgestoexcellence.org.

About HealthGrades

Health Grades, Inc. (Nasdaq: HGRD) is the leading healthcare ratings organization, providing ratings and profiles of hospitals, nursing homes and physicians. Millions of consumers and many of the nation’s largest employers, health plans and hospitals rely on HealthGrades’ independent ratings and decision-support resources to make healthcare decisions based on the quality of care. More information on the company can be found at <http://www.healthgrades.com>.

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