Anticipating the Changes in Medicare Reimbursement, The Beryl Institute’s 2010 Conference Highlights Ideas on Improving Patient Experience

Dallas (May 2010) -- The Beryl Institute’s 2010 Conference, held April 14-16, highlighted new research and successful strategies for improving the patient experience, which will be a significant factor in how hospitals and other health care organizations are reimbursed by Medicare beginning October 2012. Most health care experts agree, though, that if hospitals don’t begin work now to improve patient satisfaction and the patient experience, they will find it difficult to play catch up if their patient satisfaction scores are low and they incur financial penalties beginning in 2012.

“Since the 1980s, we’ve seen a remarkable increase in the volume of research and literature devoted to the topic of the patient experience,” said Jason Wolf, Executive Director of The Beryl Institute. “In the 1980s, there were just a handful of articles on the subject. In the 1990s, fewer than 20 articles were published. Between 2000 and 2009, more than 400 articles appeared. In this year alone, we’ll see almost 100 articles on the patient experience and I project over a thousand in this decade. It’s a topic that is growing in significance, and it’s at the center of health care reform and health care improvement.”

Wolf says research has shown that each one point decrease in satisfaction is associated with a 6 percent increase in complaints and a 5 percent increase in the rate of risk management episodes. Furthermore, he points out that the average dissatisfied patient will usually tell 25 others about the negative experience. For every patient that complains to a health care organization, 20 dissatisfied patients will not. Of those that don’t complain, only 10 percent will return in the future for care. Since it costs health care organizations 10 times more to attract new customers than it does to retain existing customers, one of the most significant financial motivations for focusing on patient experience is clear.

“Add to this equation the coming loss in Medicare reimbursement if hospitals don’t attend to patient satisfaction and the patient experience,” Wolf says, “and the financial pressure to improve patient experience is nothing short of mission critical.”

The Beryl Institute Conference: Influencing the Patient Experience featured executives from hospitals and companies that provide services to health care organizations. These thought leaders described why it is vital to focus on the patient experience and how hospitals are using social media, marketing, new nursing strategies and generational research to succeed in improving patient satisfaction. The Beryl Institute has posted most of the content from the conference on its Web site for members, including the following presentations:

• **Welcome - Beryl 2010 and Beyond: Where We’re Headed**
  
  Keynote: Paul Spiegelman - CEO of The Beryl Companies

• **Delivering Customer Service Experiences in Healthcare**
  
  Jason Wolf - Executive Director, The Beryl Institute

• **Relationship-Based Care: The Power of Teamwork to Improve the Patient Experience**
  
  Keynote: Jayne Felgen, President, Creative Health Care Management

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• A Case Study: Relationship-Based Care  
  Matt Marchbanks - General Manager, Sodexo

• Engaging Consumers through Social Media  
  Rachelle Montano - Vice President of Consulting Operations, Greystone.net

• Improving Patient Experience & Recovery Process through the Care Continuum  
  David Schofield - President & CEO, Skylight Healthcare Systems

• Creating Exceptional Patient and Family Experiences  
  Nicole Nicoloff – Director of Exceptional Patient and Family Experiences, Community Health Network

• Best Practices in Campaign Marketing and Understanding ROI  
  Peggy Mika - Director of Marketing Communications, Christiana Care Health System

• Going Social: How Alegent Health Integrated Social Media into Its Communication Strategy  
  Meagan O'Dea - Marketing Strategist & Jennifer Homann - Communications Specialist, Alegent Health

• Customer Experience - A Generational Perspective  
  Keynote: Michael Howe - Former CEO of Minute Clinic

• PEAK: How Great Healthcare Companies Get Their Mojo from Maslow  
  Keynote: Chip Conley - Author of PEAK, CEO of Joie de Vivre

• When the Music Changes So Must the Dance: Measuring the ROI of Creating a Great Patient Experience  
  Lynne Cunningham, Consultant, The Studer Group

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About The Beryl Institute:

The Beryl Institute has an unwavering commitment to improving the patient experience before, during and after the delivery of care. Founded in 2006, the Institute serves as a professional home for stakeholders who recognize that the patient experience is a critical element in the execution and evaluation of health care quality, performance and outcomes. Serving as a reliable resource for shared information and research, a dynamic incubator of new ideas and practices, and an interactive connector of effective leaders and practitioners, The Beryl Institute reaches thousands of healthcare executives and touches the lives of countless patients. Members of the Institute represent an interactive community of leaders, practitioners, academics, consultants and visionaries who are passionate about the patient experience. They contribute and access proven practices and ideas for improving the patient experience, ensuring the patient perspective is a central component of all health care conversations.

You can follow The Beryl Institute on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter (@berylinstitute) or visit The Beryl Institute Website, www.theberylinstitute.net.