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NPHHI Research Seeks to Improve Prenatal Care for Vulnerable Patients

WASHINGTON – The National Public Health and Hospital Institute (NPHHI), through its Transformation Center, has launched a one-year, federally supported project to study evidence-based best practices in prenatal care, to inform national strategies for improving maternal and infant health outcomes among Medicaid and other vulnerable populations.

NPHHI, the research affiliate of the National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (NAPH), will work with the prime contractor, Provider Resources, Inc. (PRI), and report findings to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services (CMCS) Expert Panel on Improving Maternal and Infant Health Outcomes in Medicaid/CHIP. The project will canvass NAPH member health systems selected, in part, by delivery volume, percentage of Medicaid births and geographic distribution.

“Medicaid and other vulnerable patients face challenges to prenatal health, which the safety net can help overcome through its experience caring for these populations,” said NPHHI Director and NAPH Vice President for Research, Linda C. Cummings, PhD. “We thank CMS for its strong leadership and long record of work to identify best practices and improve outcomes in prenatal care.”

“The health challenges facing our nation today are substantial” said PRI Director of Quality and Health Disparities, Warren A. Jones, MD, FAAFP. “Finding effective and meaningful solutions will require strong collaborative efforts and innovative approaches, such as this one, in order to support the forward-looking approaches CMS is currently undertaking.”

The project will assess NAPH health systems to understand how they use evidence-based practices; barriers to providing adequate prenatal care; patient characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, and language; capacity to measure birth outcomes; successful programs to improve outcomes; and system participation with state Medicaid offices and other initiatives to improve prenatal care.

NPHHI will invite CMCS, members of the expert panel, and PRI to participate in follow-up site visits to two of the assessed institutions. Those visits are expected to include interviews with patients and families.

Jill Steinbruegge, MD, PhD, NAPH senior vice president for leadership and innovation and head of the Transformation Center, will participate on the expert panel. She said that, in addition to a report to CMS on its findings, the project will support the Center's ongoing work to spread best practices among safety net hospitals. “Education is a key aspect of this project, which aligns well with our efforts through the Transformation Center to bring advances in hospital care and evidence-based practices to the broadest possible audience.”

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About the National Public Health and Hospital Institute (NPHHI)

NPHHI is the research affiliate of the National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (NAPH). NPHHI is a private, nonprofit organization established in 1988 to address the major issues facing public hospitals, safety net organizations, underserved communities, and related health policy issues of national priority. Its membership includes the health care organizations that make up NAPH. The NPHHI board includes public and nonprofit sector leaders in health policy and service delivery. For more information, visit our website at <http://www.nphhi.org/>.

About the National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (NAPH)

NAPH represents the nation's safety net hospitals and health systems, which provide high volumes of care to low-income individuals. These facilities offer high-quality health services for all patients, including the uninsured and underinsured, regardless of ability to pay. In addition to helping ensure access to health care for all Americans, safety net hospitals provide many essential communitywide services, such as primary care, trauma care, and neonatal intensive care. Safety net hospitals also train many of America's doctors, nurses, and other health care providers. Since its inception in 1980, NAPH has cultivated a strong presence on Capitol Hill, with the executive branch, and in many state capitols. NAPH advocates on behalf of its members on such issues as Medicaid, Medicare, and access to health care services for vulnerable populations. For more information, visit our website at <http://www.naph.org/>.

About Provider Resources, Inc.

Provider Resources, Inc. (PRI), recognizing the complexity of healthcare, is dedicated to supporting the healthcare community with compliance and integrity issues through education and efficient, innovative processes. From its corporate culture of compliance to its mission of providing superior healthcare services by its highly-qualified and experienced staff, PRI has identified itself as a leader in the application of innovative and reliable problem-solving approaches for the healthcare industry. PRI is comprised of four divisions, Quality and Health Disparities, Education & Outreach, Policy & Regulatory, and Program Integrity and represents an experienced healthcare organization who understands the importance of quality improvement and the regulatory environment impacts on the system. Its healthcare experts cover a varied range of specialties, such as quality improvement, patient safety, educational development and training, and conference planning, medical review, healthcare policy, program safeguard, compliance and integrity, investigations, legal review, data analysis, Medicare and Medicaid programs, healthcare claims pricing and validation. PRI is committed to building trust-based partnerships with clients by providing project-specific expertise through standardized processes to support research and review, analysis, and education. For more information please visit PRI's website at www.provider-resources.com.