

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
October 20, 2010

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**DMHC announces “Right Care Initiative” award recipients**  
*Health plans honored for work to fight diabetes and heart disease for HMO patients*

**(Sacramento)** -- Cindy Ehnes, Director of the California Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC), has announced the recipients of the third annual Right Care Initiative (RCI) awards. This year’s awards honor UnitedHealth Group and Kaiser of Southern California for improving California’s national rating in health system performance measures for fighting heart disease and diabetes, two of the most prevalent and devastating chronic diseases. Awards are given annually to California health plans meeting the goals of the DMHC’s Right Care Initiative, a three-year public-private collaborative effort launched in 2008, to improve clinical quality in three key areas: heart disease, diabetes, and hospital-acquired infections, and to rank among the best in the nation by 2011.

“We know that intervening early to control blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar will prevent heart attacks and strokes, which are key goals of the Right Care Initiative,” said Cindy Ehnes, director of the DMHC. “By working together, we can encourage all California health plans to adopt best practices quickly. According to national quality experts, meeting these high standards will save the lives of more than 2,000 Californians annually.”

UnitedHealth Group and Kaiser of Southern California received 2010 Director's Right Care Awards for the most improvement in cardiovascular disease prevention, and for reaching key goals in the prevention of heart attacks and strokes. Both UnitedHealth and Kaiser of Southern California have achieved a 52 point improvement over three years in all heart disease and diabetes categories within HEDIS (Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set), which measures American health plan performance on important dimensions of care and service.

The statewide goal of the Right Care Initiative is to reach the 90th percentile in heart and diabetes HEDIS control measures of blood pressure, lipids, and glucose, and to cut the rate of death from hospital acquired infections through concerted action. Key partners include California health

**(more)**

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plans and medical groups, the California Chronic Care Coalition, University of California, Stanford University, RAND, American Diabetes Association, American Heart/Stroke Association, California Hospital Association, California Medical Association Foundation, California Pharmacy Foundation and other disease-based and community organizations throughout the state. The annual awards were presented at the third annual Dean’s Right Care Cardiovascular and Diabetes Leadership Summit, held on October 1 at UC Berkeley.

“This third Summit indicates that important progress is being made and that the groundwork has been laid for significant future achievements,” said Dean Stephen Shortell of UC Berkeley’s School of Public Health. “The Right Care Initiative has involved an unprecedented statewide effort between government, academia, the insurance plans, the medical groups and voluntary organizations in the prevention of heart disease and strokes.”

For more information on the Right Care Initiative visit [www.rightcare.dmhc.ca.gov](http://www.rightcare.dmhc.ca.gov). The California Department of Managed Health Care is the only stand-alone HMO watchdog agency in the nation, touching the lives of more than 21 million enrollees. The DMHC has assisted more than a million Californians to resolve their health plan problems through its Help Center, educates consumers on their health care rights and responsibilities, and works closely with health plans to ensure a solvent and stable managed health care system.

Follow the DMHC on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/CADMHC>

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