

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONTACT:** Jeanie Lunsford  
Communications Manager  
CareOregon  
(503) 416-3626; lunsfordj@careoregon.org



315 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 900  
Portland, Oregon 97204  
503-416-4100 or 800-224-4840  
877-416-4161 (TTY/TDD)  
[www.careoregon.com](http://www.careoregon.com)

## **Innovative Clinic and Hospital Projects Improve Patient Outcomes**

*Health Care Providers Implement Quality Enhancements With Help From CSSI Program*

**Portland, OR, November 28, 2006** – Hospitals, clinics and medical professionals ask: how can we save more lives, improve quality and become truly patient-centered while coping with a national health care system in crisis?

In Oregon, many clinics and hospitals are seeking answers through innovative new projects. Medical professionals representing more than 40 Oregon clinics and hospitals shared the results of year-long projects funded by CareOregon's Care Support and System Innovation (CSSI) program.

CareOregon provided some \$3 million to provider-led strategies bent on making health care more safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient and equitable. This year's CSSI projects are grounded in the Institute of Medicine's call to action to improve health care delivery system in the United States.

While Dave Ford, CEO of CareOregon, commended all the projects, three CSSI teams were singled out for special recognition. The following organizations received scholarships to attend a conference hosted by the Institute of Healthcare Improvement.

- Legacy Health System is successfully managing the care and utilization of patients with multiple chronic diseases. Treatment for patients with comorbid chronic illnesses are provided through a complex case management system that includes a primary care physician, medical social workers, community resource specialists, pharmacists and health educators.
- Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) hospital launched a medication reconciliation initiative designed to reduce medication errors during hospital stays and at discharge. At OHSU, the project resulted in a collaborative effort to develop and initiate a process for reconciliation at admission, said Ruby Jason, director of Inpatient Pediatrics at OHSU's Doernbecher Children's Hospital. "This process is an attempt to have the medication history of the patient become a focus of an intake interview. It involves the patient, the family, the community physician and the admitting physician, as well as pharmacists and nurses, all working together to gather correct and accurate information," she said.
- CODA, which provides comprehensive drug and alcohol abuse treatment and prevention, sought to increase access, decrease waiting times and increase engagement and retention. Being part of CSSI allowed CODA to extend a Robert Wood Johnson grant to address those issues. For Janet Bardossi, deputy

executive director, the project enabled CODA to extend quality service to more members of the community. “When people were disenrolled from the Oregon Health Plan, the impact on clients was relatively tragic. What happened with this program was, suddenly, we have the capacity to impact care again. We can make real change in real people’s lives, and that’s the hearts’ and minds’ part,” she said.

According to Ford, purposeful health care system change is occurring throughout the world, and Oregon has a unique opportunity to play a crucial role in the process of transforming health care systems design. “The innovations we have seen have different funding mechanisms, but there is a very strong pattern emerging among many areas. The common thread is intentional systems integration – these projects are done with purposeful design and effort,” he said.

While problems in the health care system persist, new modes of thinking and practice are emerging to address issues in access to quality health care, said Ford.

“Rather than a doomsday outlook, we refer to this as a time rich in ‘fertile chaos’-- rich with possibilities. You are the ones that are growing new ideas in your practices. Together, we have an opportunity to revitalize health care,” Ford told participating providers. “We’re building a learning community, and we’re making a big difference in terms of how we’re changing quality health care delivery.”

Looking ahead to 2007, CareOregon’s CSSI program plans to focus on ambulatory care-based projects, hospital-based projects, innovation projects, and projects solicited by CareOregon. Ambulatory care-based projects will focus on whole system primary care delivery redesign; chronic care disease management and preventive care; behavioral and physical health integration; and improvements in office practice and infrastructure. Hospital-based projects will be based on one or more IHI 100,000 Lives Campaign interventions that have been proven to prevent avoidable deaths.

For more information about the CSSI program, contact Diana Wolford at 503-416-1725 or e-mail [wolfordd@careoregon.org](mailto:wolfordd@careoregon.org).

### **About CareOregon**

CareOregon is committed to improving and protecting the health of low income and vulnerable Oregonians. The not-for-profit health plan is dedicated to providing access to high quality, cost-effective, culturally competent care for members and supporting the providers who care for them. For more information, visit <http://www.careoregon.org>.