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Hospitals, Partners to Launch
Indiana Patient Safety Center

For Release at May 10:

Indiana's hospitals are marshalling the state's tremendous health care and academic assets to improve patient safety dramatically.

The Indiana Hospital & Health Association will launch an Indiana Patient Safety Center July 1 to help its 167 member facilities develop reliable systems that prevent harm to patients.

The center will bring together an unprecedented depth of resources through collaboration with the Indiana University School of Medicine, the Regenstrief Institute, Purdue University's Regenstrief Center for Healthcare Engineering, and the Indiana State Medical Association. IHHA also anticipates significant involvement of Health Care Excel, Indiana's federally contracted quality improvement organization.

One of the main functions of the center will be to provide education, training, and other tools to foster cultures of safety in hospitals' complex work environments. The center partners will use evidence-based practices to help eliminate delivery system failures that could cause harm to patients. Because of the universities' research resources, the center will play a leadership role nationally in identifying and disseminating best practices.

IHHA has named Betsy Lee, a national consultant on health care quality improvement and patient safety, as the center's first director. The Carmel, Ind. resident has 24 years of health care experience. A registered nurse with a master's degree in public health focusing on health policy and administration, Lee has led risk management and quality improvement programs for the

University of North Carolina Hospitals, Indiana University Hospital, Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis, and American Health Network. For the last five years, she has been a national director and faculty member for key projects for the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, a Cambridge, Mass.-based not-for-profit organization.

In announcing the Patient Safety Center commitment, IHHA Board Chairman Vincent C. Caponi, CEO of the St. Vincent Health system, noted that the hospitals' commitment builds upon the spirit of Gov. Daniel's call for increased public accountability for patient safety.

"Hospitals immediately volunteered to help the governor implement an adverse event reporting system. The data it will generate will be useful to focus process improvement activities. We believe the Patient Safety Center is the important next step toward accelerating change.

"We are patterning our work on both the Federal Aviation Administration's voluntary safety program and the VA National Center for Patient Safety. We will foster a blame-free culture of safety that helps us identify system failures and work aggressively together to prevent them from recurring in all of our organizations. What sets us apart from efforts elsewhere is the combination of strong physician leadership and the rich knowledge and research base that our academic partners provide," Caponi said.

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The Indiana Hospital&Health Association provides advocacy, communication, data, and educational services for its membership of 167 Indiana hospitals.