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## **CAREGIVER ACTION NETWORK LAUNCHES PROGRAM TO RECOGNIZE BEST PRACTICES IN PATIENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

### *Seeking Nominations to Help Improve Patient-Centered Care*

The Caregiver Action Network (CAN) is pleased to announce the launch of an inaugural program, *Advancing Excellence: Best Practices in Patient and Family Engagement*, which seeks to identify and recognize best practices in patient and family engagement (PFE), and share these stories widely to help improve the quality and safety of healthcare across the United States.

As the nation's leading family caregiver organization working to improve the quality of life for more than 90 million Americans who care for loved ones with chronic conditions, disabilities, disease, or the frailties of old age, CAN sees tremendous value in identifying and sharing best practices to improve patient-centered care.

"Engaging patients and families in the care of their loved ones is a critical component to improving healthcare for all Americans," said John Schall, CEO of CAN. "More than ever before, there are a number of outstanding efforts underway to better engage patients and families. We're thrilled to be able to showcase those programs and leaders who are helping to further patient and family engagement."

Evidence increasingly shows that patients who take an active role in their health have better outcomes – including decreased length of hospital stays, better satisfaction with their medical experience, and even lowering the costs of care. A 2013 study published in *Health Affairs* found that the least activated patients incurred a 21 percent increase in medical costs compared to those who were most engaged.<sup>1</sup>

"Improving communication with patients can and will improve patient outcomes. That's why CAN wants to support providers who empower patients and caregivers to act as advocates, and make institutional changes that improve patient care," continued Schall.

The Caregiver Action Network (CAN) is now seeking nominations in three categories:

- ✓ **Patients and caregivers:** Individuals and caregivers who have gone above and beyond to identify collaborations to improve patient care
- ✓ **Hospital staff:** Hospital staff (including physicians, nurses, paraprofessionals and social workers) who embody PFE attributes and have worked to carry out PFE

- ✓ **Hospital/healthcare leadership:** Leaders who have found ways to translate patient insights and questions to drive change in the hospital setting by implementing substantial PFE programs and policies in individual hospitals or networks

Nominations will be reviewed by an external committee of evaluators, including leaders of nonprofit organizations, advisors for hospital patient advisory councils, and healthcare professionals committed to patient-centered care. Best practices will be identified and shared during a webinar in late June 2014, with the ultimate goal of further disseminating these best practices across healthcare settings.

Evaluators will look for contributions that have led to improvements in healthcare as a result of PFE efforts. Submissions will be scored on several factors, including outcomes achieved, whether changes were adapted to other settings, the impact on vulnerable populations (e.g. the elderly, pediatric, minority or underserved) and focus on patient safety.

Nomination forms may be found online at [www.CaregiverAction.org](http://www.CaregiverAction.org) and are due by May 23, 2014. Please submit completed nomination forms to [nominations@CaregiverAction.org](mailto:nominations@CaregiverAction.org) and contact CAN with additional questions.

## About CAN

The Caregiver Action Network ([www.CaregiverAction.org](http://www.CaregiverAction.org)) is the nation's leading family caregiver organization working to improve the quality of life for more than 90 million Americans who care for loved ones with chronic conditions, disabilities, disease, or the frailties of old age. CAN serves a broad spectrum of family caregivers ranging from the parents of children with special needs, to the families and friends of wounded soldiers; from a young couple dealing with a diagnosis of MS, to adult children caring for parents with Alzheimer's disease. CAN (formerly the National Family Caregivers Association) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization providing education, peer support, and resources to family caregivers across the country free of charge.

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1. [James, Julia. "Health Policy Brief: Patient Engagement," \*Health Affairs\*, February 14, 2013. Accessed April 17, 2014.](#)