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**THE INSTITUTE FOR HEALTHCARE IMPROVEMENT ANNOUNCES
FIRST INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE BASED SOLELY ON
INTERNET COMMUNICATION**

**Participating Teams From Hospitals in 20 Cities
Will Focus on Improving Office Practices**

BOSTON, MA – May 17, 2004 – The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) announced today that teams from health care organizations in 20 cities have been selected to participate in a major new initiative that will utilize Internet communications exclusively to improve access in primary care. This new initiative will expand Internet-based education and cooperation between health care organizations to improve office practices and waiting times. The program, the first of its kind to rely solely on Internet communications, is modeled on IHI's already proven Breakthrough Series methodology for collaborative improvement. The project, officially called "The Sloan/IHI Virtual Breakthrough Series Collaborative to Improve Access in Primary Care" was created by IHI and funded primarily by a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

The participating hospitals are:

- **Affinity Health System, Affinity Medical Group (Oshkosh, WI)**
- **Children's Hospitals and Clinics (St. Paul, MN)**
- **Chinle comprehensive Health Care Facility (Chinle, AZ)**
- **Clifton Park CBOC, Upstate New York Health Care Services (Albany, NY)**
- **Columbia Valley Community Health (Wenatchee, WA)**
- **Community Clinical Services, Sisters of Charity (Lewiston, ME)**
- **Madrona Medical Group (Bellingham, WA)**
- **Marshfield Clinic (Rice Lake, WI)**
- **People's Community Clinic (Austin, TX)**
- **PracticePartners Greater Portland Medical Group (Portland, OR)**
- **PracticePartners Western Maine Family Practice (South Portland, ME)**
- **Ralph H. Johnson DVA Medical Center (Charleston, SC)**
- **Rochester VA Clinic (Rochester, NY)**
- **Skagit Valley Medical Center (Mount Vernon, WA)**
- **TAMS Teen Age Medical Childrens (Minneapolis, MN)**
- **The Health Center at Tremont, North Bronx Healthcare (Bronx, NY)**
- **The Monroe Clinic (Monroe, WI)**
- **UW Health-Research Park Family Medicine (Madison, WI)**
- **Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center (Hillsboro, OR)**
- **Winthrop Health Center, MGHA (Winthrop, ME)**

The project's mandate is to develop, test, refine, and document an Internet-based approach to collaborative learning and improvement among health care systems. The goal is to enable IHI and the hospital teams to collaborate on improving outcomes and quality of care with lower costs and greater convenience than is possible by traditional means of communication (conferences and seminars, telephone conference calls, among other things). The teams will meet via Internet conferencing for three half-day learning sessions and remain connected through the listserv, regular web-based conference calls and monthly email reports.

“The Internet can eliminate two traditional obstacles to collaboration between health care organizations, funding for travel to a common location and time spent away from the office,” said Dr. Donald Berwick, President and CEO of IHI. “This initiative seeks to realize the potential of Internet communication among hospital organizations and to demonstrate the improvements in care that can result from that increased collaboration.”

Mark Murray, MD, MPA, an international authority on improving office practices who will oversee the initial effort, stated, “IHI’s Collaborative methodology has helped practices reduce their waiting times throughout the United States and the world. This initiative will use the Internet to expand the potential for improvement set by previous programs because these collaborators can improve without being required to leave their own facilities.”

“The Sloan Foundation is pleased to be able to support this historic IHI initiative,” said Frank Mayadas, Sloan Program Director. “Its potential for creating an effective model for changing practice in health care organizations and other industries is enormous.”

*Sloan Consortium is an association of institutions and organizations that promote online learning to help continually improve its quality, scale, and breadth so education will become a part of everyday life, accessible and affordable for anyone, at any time, in a wide variety of disciplines. Membership is **free and open** to academic institutions, corporate training organizations, and organizations that support quality in higher education. Sloan-C is located at Babson and Olin Colleges in Needham, Massachusetts. For more information, visit www.sloan-c.org.*

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) is a not-for-profit organization leading the improvement of health care throughout the world. Founded in 1991 and based in Boston, MA, IHI is a catalyst for change, cultivating innovative concepts for improving patient care and implementing programs for putting those ideas into action. Thousands of health care providers, including many of the finest hospitals in the world, participate in IHI’s groundbreaking work.