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**NEW “GUIDING COALITION FOR HEALTH” UNITES
TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF MILLIONS BY 2020**

IHI convenes more than 200 innovators from health and health care to achieve a culture of health

Cambridge, MA – October 8, 2014 – Despite spending nearly twice as much as most developed countries on health care, the US has poorer health outcomes than all other developed countries. Many argue that this “paradox” is directly related to the US’ failure to appreciate the powerful role that social care and community support play in helping people maintain their health, especially when all sectors, including the health care system, work together. Without such linkages, too many people derive only temporary benefit from an expensive patchwork of reactive medical interventions, when what’s also needed is a proactive, whole-person, whole-community approach to achieve optimal health.

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), best known as a leading innovator in health care improvement worldwide, began to act on this more comprehensive view in 2008 with its work on the IHI Triple Aim – better experience of care and better health of populations at a lower cost – a framework now widely pursued and considered key to health care’s future. But, despite the committed efforts of IHI and other professionals, there has not been demonstrable improvement in the health of communities on a large scale. To address this gap, IHI along with 30 founding partners dedicated to community health today convened 200 leaders and implementers across the domains of public health, community health, health care, policy, academia, business, and financing, along with patients and community members, to form a multi-sector, public-private partnership committed to learning how to best support communities in their efforts to improve the health of millions of Americans over the next five years.

The **Guiding Coalition for Health** is organized around the core belief that long-term, large-scale results are possible only by working alongside and *with* communities instead of attempting to fix health by doing *to* communities. With new payment structures and a growing number of vulnerable individuals desperately in need of better health, the time is right to dramatically support and accelerate efforts already underway across the country.

“We need a quantum leap toward the creation of health across the country,” says IHI President and CEO, Maureen Bisognano. “We must align organizations and sectors to achieve something far greater together than any one group could ever achieve alone – a monumental shift toward health, as we’ve never seen before.”

“This will require a concerted effort across all of the determinants of health,” says IHI Executive Vice President, Derek Feeley. “That’s why we’re honored to bring together the talents that can harness, scale up, and spread promising, results-driven work already taking place in pockets across the country. So, together, we can have a real, measurable impact – creating health and well-being for millions of people in the US.”

In supporting this shift, members of the Guiding Coalition are aligning themselves with the aims of leading organizations, including the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which is spearheading and supporting local and national efforts to build a Culture of Health; and the Institute of Medicine, which has called for better integration between primary care and public health to improve the health of populations.

Building the Guiding Coalition for Health

The meeting convened by IHI today began laying the groundwork for the Guiding Coalition for Health. Members will develop new models to better support populations and communities seeking better health, while reaching across sectors for opportunities to partner, spread best practices, and achieve results on a large scale.

“It will never be enough to simply have bold and inspiring goals for better health to unify us across sectors,” says Soma Stout, MD, MS, and Executive External Lead for Health Improvement, IHI. “We need to learn a new way of doing business, one in which we act, think, and serve differently, one in which we reach across boundaries, adopt a learning and improvement approach and challenge ourselves to learn how to do better in partnership with the people we are here to serve, especially those at the highest risk of inequities in health outcomes. That’s the only way we’ll get a different result.”

This week’s meeting, called “Escape Velocity to a Culture of Health,” served as the first step toward creating the [Guiding Coalition for Health](#). Just as physics defines “escape velocity” as the speed at which an object needs to be traveling to break free of a planet’s or moon’s gravity, members of the new coalition want to break free of the gravitational pull of mismatched and sometimes perverse incentives, political gridlock, and fragmented systems that drive an overreliance on health care fixes over proactive investments in health, pursued in partnership with empowered and engaged individuals and communities. Meeting participants worked to create a strategic plan, mapped their collective assets and capabilities, and formed workgroups to drive the initiative forward.

These workgroups centered on several core strategies: 1) Creating a health care system that’s good at health and good at care; 2) Creating bridges between health care, community and public health; 3) Creating healthy communities; 4) Promoting peer-to-peer supports; 5) Creating enabling conditions, such as sustainable business models; and 6) Developing new mindsets. With influential partners who have the ability to create these changes in health care, community health, public health and payment, the Guiding Coalition for Health shows potential to create a different result and is generating new hope.

Cristin Lind, a parent of a child with special needs, is now serving as Co-Chair of the Guiding Coalition for Health leadership team. In addressing the group, she remarked, “Health is woven into the cloth of life, and to divide it into separate pieces labeled ‘school’ and ‘work’ and ‘family’ unravels the entire fabric. Yet the very systems meant to support my son, Gabriel, often tried to do just that. Accessing and coordinating his services became a greater challenge than his actual condition.”

Lind added, “So when I got the call asking me to join this effort, what could I say but yes? For me, the call was asking me this: Am I ready to tear down the illusory walls that separate me from you and us from them? Am I willing to work to build something better in a spirit of wholeness? As a mother and an advocate, I had to answer—yes.”

The Coalition expects to replicate this effort globally and has already received requests from leaders across the globe to be part of this global initiative to improve health at scale by 2020.

Join the Guiding Coalition for Health

The Guiding Coalition for Health is welcoming new members. Learn more about the Guiding Coalition for Health [here](#) and join the discussion on Twitter at #Coalition4Health.

Join the IHI Leadership Alliance

The [IHI Leadership Alliance](#) held its inaugural meeting alongside the first gathering of the Guiding Coalition for Health, with several Alliance members attending both events. The Alliance comprises health care teams from leading organizations worldwide who are committed to learning, sharing results, and working together on the key issues shaping the health care system of the future. Teams will collaborate to better understand the designs, practices, and strategies that lead to exemplary systems. Alliance members are committed to advancing the effectiveness of their own organizations and the health care system as a whole. Because the health care system of the future is also going to play a stronger role in the creation of healthy communities, the IHI Leadership Alliance is aligned closely with the Guiding Coalition for Health. The Leadership Alliance is open to new members.

About The Institute for Healthcare Improvement

IHI is a leading innovator in health and health care improvement worldwide. For more than 25 years, we have partnered with visionaries, leaders, and front-line practitioners around the globe to spark bold, inventive ways to improve the health of individuals and populations. Recognized as an innovator, convener, trustworthy partner, and driver of results, we are the first place to turn for expertise, help, and encouragement for anyone, anywhere who wants to change health and health care profoundly for the better. To advance our mission, IHI's work is focused in five key areas: Improvement Capability; Person- and Family-Centered Care; Patient Safety; Quality, Cost, and Value; and Triple Aim for Populations. Learn more at ihi.org.