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BOLD RESPONSE IS NEEDED TO NEW RAND HEALTH STUDY

BOSTON, MA – June 25, 2003 – Donald M. Berwick, MD, MPP, President and CEO of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, issued the following statement today on the new RAND Health Study, which found that adults in the United States fail to receive recommended health care nearly half the time.

“The RAND Health Study to be published Thursday in the *New England Journal of Medicine* is another wake-up call to the medical community and the American people. The U.S. health care system is simply not performing at acceptable levels.

The tragedy is that we know how to make it better, but we as a nation have not fully committed to that goal. America spends 40% more on its health care than any other country, and we do not have the best outcomes. We have an overbuilt system that is competent technically, but does not attend well to the patient’s experience or the rapid movement of science into practice. The biggest defects in American health care are defects of cooperation. We don’t work together. It’s a fragmented system, perfecting silos but not the journey of the patient.

There’s no question at all that quality can be improved, not just a little, but dramatically. Unfortunately, we in the United States are so used to thinking that our health care system is first-rate that our eyes are closed to the truth. This RAND study should help open them.”

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.