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IHI JOINS CALL FOR ACTION TO IMPROVE HEALTH IN LOW AND MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRIES

Salzburg Global Seminar, Co-Organized by IHI, Hopes to Galvanize a New Approach to Solving Global Health Care Problems

Cambridge, MA – May 10, 2012 – Low and middle income countries have major health challenges: many countries are not on track to attain their Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), non-communicable diseases are emerging as the primary cause of mortality for the future and little progress has been made in addressing unsafe care that harms millions each year.

Despite significant improvements in life expectancy and in some aspects of health care in the last two decades, daunting challenges remain to be solved in these countries. The Salzburg Global Seminar “Making Health Care Better in Low and Middle Income Economies,” held April 22-27, was co-organized by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) and other leaders in global health care improvement. The Seminar brought together global health leaders and practitioners who believe that a change in the health care paradigm is needed to help countries address the critical gap between knowledge of interventions that improve population health and the care actually provided to patients. Quality Improvement (QI) is one approach that can be applied to rapidly improve health system performance and outcomes. QI is a proven, data driven method that places the responsibility and knowledge for rapid change in the hands of every patient, provider, manager and leader.

Fifty-eight health officials and representatives of leading health agencies from 33 countries, participants of the Salzburg Global Seminar, are now urging all health policy leaders, patients, communities, health care workers, non-governmental organizations, development partners and governments to endorse recommendations that could drive a new approach to solving health challenges in these countries. IHI joins these participants in calling on:

1. Governments to be accountable for the improvement of health care through legislation, policies and necessary resources
2. Health policy leaders to adopt and promote Quality Improvement as a cornerstone of better health for all

3. Communities to actively advocate for quality health care as part of their rights and responsibilities
4. Development partners to invest in approaches that drive sustainable context-specific improvements in global health
5. Non-governmental organizations and those providing technical assistance in global health to incorporate evidence-based improvement methods in their work
6. Health care workers to continuously improve the delivery of expert and compassionate care to patients, their families and communities
7. Patients to be empowered and at the forefront of promoting a shared vision for better health for all.

“The Salzburg Seminar convened at a time when we urgently need new ideas to prevent the millions of unnecessary deaths each year in low and middle income countries,” said Pierre Barker, MD, IHI Senior Vice President. “Quality Improvement is a proven approach that is ideally suited to this challenge as it unlocks new ideas from those who know the system best – patients and providers, are highly adaptable to local context and can be implemented without major addition of resources.”

Sir Liam Donaldson, World Health Organization (WHO) Patient Safety Envoy, and Dr. Nils Daulaire, Director of the Office of Global Health Affairs, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, will help lead a special session at the World Health Assembly in Geneva in May to present the seven recommendations to Ministers of Health and health leaders from more than 140 countries.

In addition to IHI, a small group of experts from USAID, University of North Carolina, the WHO Patient Safety Programme, HEALTHQUAL International, Heidelberg University and Salzburg Global Seminar, led by Dr. Rashad Massoud from University Research Corporation (URC), organized the seminar. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, USAID, Salzburg Scholarships, URC, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), WHO Patient Safety, IHI, Atlantic Philanthropies, Nippon Foundation and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention funded the meeting.

The full text of the Salzburg Statement on Making Health Care Better in Low and Middle Income Economies is available at <http://www.salzburgglobal.org/go/salzburgstatement-info>.

Those who wish to add their name to the Statement, in agreement with its contents, may do so at the following link: <http://www.hciproject.org/salzburg-call-to-action>.

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (www.IHI.org) is an independent not-for-profit organization that works with health care providers and leaders throughout the world to achieve safe and effective health care. IHI focuses on motivating and building the will for change, identifying and testing new models of care in partnership with both patients and health care professionals, and ensuring the broadest possible adoption of best practices and effective innovations. Based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, IHI mobilizes teams,

organizations, and increasingly nations, through its staff of more than 100 people and partnerships with hundreds of faculty around the world.

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