

For Immediate Release

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HPP Launches New Alliance with Belmont and PRHI

Partnership Targets Improvements in Health Care Quality, Safety, and Efficiency

Nashville– September 3, 2008 – Healthcare Performance Partners (HPP), a Nashville-based consulting firm, and Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI) will offer a new certificate program in Lean-based healthcare processes through Belmont University's Jack C. Massey Graduate School of Business on its Nashville campus. The program is designed around a Toyota Production System (TPS) model and will utilize the award-winning high-tech simulation labs within Belmont's College of Health Sciences. The first course is scheduled for November 10-14, 2008.

Collectively, the Belmont, HPP, and PRHI partnership will bring this innovative program to Nashville, with an expectation of drawing participants from across the U.S., as well as Canada and Europe. The program consists of a five-day Lean Healthcare Certificate course titled *Lean Healthcare for Quality, Safety and Efficiency*, and will be offered four times a year. One innovative dimension of the course will be the opportunity for participants to simulate actual healthcare operations through use of Belmont's state-of-the-art facilities, including health science simulation labs. Individuals will learn what it is like to work in acute care "step down" units and maternity and pediatric nursing units through hands-on application of TPS/Lean principles. Although the November course is already nearing its 30-participant capacity in advance registrations, the alliance intends to offer subsequent courses in February and May of 2009.

PRHI developed a nationally recognized adaptation of Toyota's methods for health care called Perfecting Patient CareSM (PPC) and HPP, along with its affiliate Lean Healthcare West, has specialized in providing TPS/Lean training, consulting, and coaching for healthcare

clients across the country and more recently in Europe. The certificate program combines their strengths and the partnership paves the way for PRHI and HPP to expand capacity for coaching TPS/Lean in healthcare institutions working on quality, cost, and safety improvement.

Use of TPS/Lean methods in health care is expected to expand significantly because of increasing pressure healthcare institutions face to improve patient safety and quality, including Medicare's plans to begin denying payment for some healthcare-acquired infections and egregious medical errors. Medicare's new payment practices, to be phased in beginning in October, are aimed not only at improving safety, but also at reining in runaway costs. National estimates suggest nearly 40 percent of U.S. healthcare spending is wasted on treating complications from preventable errors and infections, duplicative testing and inefficiency, among other things. A Commonwealth Fund study ranked U.S. health care highest in cost among international competitors, but last on safety, quality, access, efficiency and outcomes.

"There's no doubt the incentives of health care are shifting and that's a wake-up call," said HPP CEO Charles Hagood. "Payers are increasingly demanding value and HPP and PRHI have both helped demonstrate just how powerful a tool TPS and Lean can be in eliminating the waste, error and inefficiency that make health care so costly. Our partnership with Belmont, a leader in business and health sciences education, in conjunction with PRHI will help provide for speedier and more dramatic transformations in work redesign and performance improvement."

"Quality is no longer an option," said PRHI President and Chief Executive Officer Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD. "Our healthcare systems in the United States, although at the frontiers of medicine and technology, rank among the world's most expensive, unsafe, and inefficient. This partnership is about changing that. We want to give our healthcare workers the tools for perfecting patient care, using scarce human and material resources optimally, and meeting the escalating requirements for quality by payers and regulators."

PRHI has taught its Toyota-based method to more than 3,000 healthcare professionals in a four-day program known as PPC University and in customized training sessions offered on site at healthcare institutions.

HPP educates, consults with, and trains executives and staffs on the principles of Lean Healthcare drawing on its many years of TPS/Lean experience in various industries as well as its staff's clinical expertise. HPP also assists hospitals and clinics in their new facilities designs in the application of these philosophies on a proactive basis during the design and construction phase of a facility. The company's consultants focus on guiding clients throughout the implementation phase of a transformation, striving to make Lean Healthcare a way of life in daily

operations. HPP has helped implement Lean in hospital systems throughout North America and has now expanded its focus toward European markets as well via affiliate companies.

ABOUT PITTSBURGH REGIONAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

The Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI) is a multi-stakeholder coalition seeking to improve healthcare safety and quality and contain costs through the use of evidence-based practices, elimination of waste and error and development improved and replicable clinical and reimbursement models. Now celebrating it's 10th anniversary, PRHI was founded by healthcare, business, government and insurance industry leaders on the premise that quality represents the soundest, most enduring cost-containment strategy for health care. www.prhi.org

ABOUT HEALTHCARE PERFORMANCE PARTNERS

HPP has assembled an array of Lean Healthcare Consultants and Trainers of unparalleled depth and experience. HPP and its parent company, The Access Group (TAG), has an impressive track record of successful Lean implementation and training at several major corporations throughout the world.

In addition to an array of experienced Lean Healthcare staff from industry, HPP staff also includes current and former physicians, nurses, physician assistants, and healthcare administrators. HPP Lean Healthcare Consultants and Trainers have spent years perfecting the application and teaching of these principles in a wide variety of health care settings.

HPP's mission is to build the healthcare organization's core Lean Healthcare competencies in a way that becomes self-sustaining. HPP has developed a practical, focused approach that quickly generates enthusiasm among staff, and sustainable improvements that yield a rapid return on your investment. www.hpp.bz and www.tag.bz

ABOUT MASSEY GRADUATE SCHOOL AT BELMONT UNIVERSITY

The Jack C. Massey Graduate School of Business offers high-quality graduate business programs designed for working professionals. The curriculum is designed to provide challenging, yet practical content in a flexible format. Faculty stimulate critical thinking and creative problem solving while encouraging strong communication skills and a solid framework for ethical business decision-making. The Massey School boasts a proud tradition in its healthcare orientation, beginning with primary benefactor Jack C. Massey. In addition to its core coverage in subjects such as business administration and accounting, the curriculum is uniquely structured around the themes of entrepreneurship, values-based leadership and ethical decision-making, all within a global business environment.

www.belmont.edu/business/graduatebusiness

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