

MEDIA CONTACT:

Matthew C. Mireles, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Community Medical Foundation for Patient Safety
6300 West Loop South, Suite 288
Bellaire, Texas 77401
Telephone: 832.778.7777; Fax: 832.778.7778
Email: mcmireles@comofcom.com
Website: www.communityofcompetence.com

NEWS RELEASE

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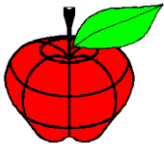
**The Next Step in Patient Safety:
The National Patient Safety Community**

(BELLAIRE, TEXAS – May 11, 2010) Eleven years after the Institute of Medicine (IOM) reported 44,000 to 98,000 U.S. patients die from medical error in the hospital, many patients and healthcare experts are concerned about the progress of improvement in safety and quality of health care. To study this concern, the nonprofit Community Medical Foundation for Patient Safety (CMFPS), a research group specializing in patient safety research and education, is leading a national effort to survey and evaluate patient safety activities and programs.

From a two-year survey, CMFPS has created the National Patient Safety Community based on the responses and networking. Fifty-two organizations responded to the survey of existing patient safety programs in the U.S. Results from the survey have been carefully compiled and published in the first *National Patient Safety Directory*. Elizabeth A. Smith, Ph.D., founder of CMFPS, states, “The first step in forming a new community is to find out who is actively engaged in patient safety and why”. Smith developed and trademarked a new organizational concept Community of Competence™, that was used as the foundation and framework for the National Patient Safety Community.

The inspiration of the National Patient Safety Community came from several patient safety advocates. One in particular is Lisa Lindell, author of *108 Days*, who encouraged CMFPS to conduct the annual survey and create the *National Directory*. To her surprise, no one knows who is involved in patient safety across the country. Lindell comments, “Individuals and organizations working in patient safety need to network with one another to share resources and let patients and families know what they are doing in patient safety.” She believes that medical error happens because healthcare professionals tend to work in silos and seldom share information. Improvement in patient safety should not be the best-kept secret. Information and knowledge should be shared and disseminated so patients can benefit from them.

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The first *National Patient Safety Directory* is an important comprehensive reference that lists members of the National Patient Safety Community, Patient Safety Organizations (PSOs), and each state's review boards, health departments and hospital associations. Comparison tables are used to present much of the patient safety information from the national survey.

In addition to the *National Patient Safety Directory*, CMFPS published the first *Dictionary of Patient Safety* to help define and list commonly used patient safety terms and concepts. For example, the terms "near miss", "close call", "good catch" and "near accident" all mean "an event or situation that did not produce patient harm, but only due to an unexpected or natural intervention...". These terms are often used in slightly different context.

With the creation of a new community, the National Patient Safety Community, it is important to begin defining the language, jargon and terms to be used by this community. Smith added, "One of the most essential qualities and aspects of any community is effective communication." The *Dictionary of Patient Safety* is one of many first steps in advancing our communication in the collective work to improve patient safety and healthcare quality.

For more information about the National Patient Safety Community, the *National Patient Safety Directory*, and the *Dictionary of Patient Safety*, please contact CMFPS. Copies of both publications are now available.

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About Community Medical Foundation for Patient Safety



Community Medical Foundation for Patient Safety, established in December 2003 as a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt, active learning organization based in the Houston area, is a leader in patient safety research and education. Our mission is to *promote and support patient safety through research, education, and the demonstrated practice of patient-centered health care*. On behalf of the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has recognized and listed Community Medical Foundation for Patient Safety as Patient Safety Organization #29.
