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## **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Names DFWBGH as Community Leader for Value-Driven Health Care**

**DALLAS – March 1, 2007** – U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt today announced the Dallas-Fort Worth Business Group on Health (DFWBGH) as the "Community Leader for Value-Driven Health Care" for the 12-county DFW metropolitan area. The Community Leader distinction is awarded to an organization that leads collaborative, coalition-building efforts to create value-driven health care within a state or region, and is a step toward achieving value-exchange status. In a plan announced Wednesday, HHS will bring local collaboratives into a nation-wide system, where collaboratives would use nationally-recognized standards to measure and improve quality of care in their local areas.

The Community Leader honor was presented to the DFWBGH at an event held today where area business and health leaders joined Secretary Leavitt to pledge their support for the Administration's new Value-Driven Health Care initiative to transform the U.S. health care system. Leading Texas companies and organizations, such as American Airlines, EDS, Lockheed Martin, Sabre Holdings, Texas Instruments, Verizon, Aetna, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas, Humana, Cigna, UnitedHealthcare, Tenet Healthcare and VHA, Inc. joined DFWBGH in signing their official support for value-driven health care.

Secretary Leavitt is leading a national movement toward transparency and value-driven health care purchasing to improve health care quality, information and cost-effectiveness. Based on President Bush's recent Executive Order committing Federal health programs, the goal is to provide meaningful, consistent information on both the quality and price of health care services.

"The Dallas-Fort Worth Business Group on Health has demonstrated outstanding leadership, and we are proud to recognize this group as a pioneer organization in the nationwide network that we are building," said Secretary Leavitt. "Our aim together is to achieve better care at lower costs for all Americans by building on quality improvement, cost awareness and collaborative action."

The "Community Leader for Value-Driven Health Care" distinction was created to designate organizations to serve as the primary coalition-builder to advance health transformation in states. The designated organizations will be at the forefront of continuing to bring together leaders at the local and regional level to achieve the "Four Cornerstones" of value-driven health care: interoperable health information technology; transparency of price information; transparency of quality information; and the use of incentives to promote high-quality and cost-efficient health care.

"We are honored to be named as a Community Leader and applaud the leadership of Secretary Leavitt to create a better health care system with improved quality and lower costs," said Marianne Fazen, executive director for the DFWBGH. "It's a testament to the ongoing efforts over the years made by the DFWBGH and its employer members to improve the quality and value of health care."

DFWBGH joins only four other organizations to be recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as Community Leaders: the Center for Health Transformation, the Puget Sound Health Alliance, the Greater Detroit Area Health Council, and the Cleveland Health Action Council. The Department's recognition of Community Leaders represents an integral step in the work to build a national network of regional organizations that bring together local stakeholders to improve health care and control costs.

“All health care is local and to bring about meaningful change in the health care delivery system, it must begin at a community level,” said Andrew Webber, president and CEO of the National Business Coalition on Health (NBCH). “We congratulate the DFWBGH and are thrilled that four of the organizations selected by Secretary’s Leavitt’s office are members of NBCH. It’s a validation of the important work of employer coalitions across the country.”

To learn more about the Four Cornerstones: <http://hhs.gov/transparency/>. Complete information regarding criteria for the "Community Leader" designation is available at: <http://www.hhs.gov/transparency/communityleader.pdf>. Additional details on Secretary Leavitt’s plan to create value exchanges is available at: <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2007pres/20070228.html>

### **About Dallas-Fort Worth Business Group on Health**

The Dallas-Fort Worth Business Group on Health is a 130-member coalition of Dallas and Fort Worth area employers committed to market-based health care reform. Activities include: education programs on topics of key interest to employers; quality improvement initiatives providing comparative measures of quality, outcomes and care processes; relationship building initiatives; and legislative updates and analyses. Members include American Airlines, Bell Helicopter-Textron, Brinker International, EDS, Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, JC Penney, Neiman Marcus, Sabre Holdings, Southwest Airlines, Texas Instruments, TXU, Verizon and others. A member of the National Business Coalition on Health, DFWBGH’s goals are to empower employers to make informed health care purchasing decisions and to encourage health care providers to continuously improve their performance. [www.dfwbgh.org](http://www.dfwbgh.org).

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