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**Bridges to Excellence Physician Reward Program
Expands to New Jersey**

*Employers, health plans and doctors work together to improve
quality of care and costs for diabetes*

TRENTON, N.J. – January 23, 2008 – Today Bridges to Excellence (BTE), the nation's largest effort to reward physicians for delivery of high quality care, announced the expansion of its program into New Jersey. The first BTE program to be implemented in the Garden State will be the Diabetes Care Link (DCL) program. The use of BTE metrics for diabetes care will improve the health status of New Jersey residents. It is estimated that BTE could save more than \$60 million per year in avoidable health care costs and result in annual rewards for physicians of \$8-12 million.

A number of participants have been instrumental in bringing Bridges to Excellence to New Jersey. Employers include Verizon (a founding member of BTE), AstraZeneca, AtlantiCare, Novo Nordisk, Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG) and Trump Entertainment Resorts. Aetna, CIGNA, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey and UnitedHealthcare are the participating health plans.

"BTE is a productive partnership for our company because it serves as a natural extension of our ongoing wellness initiatives," said Judy Fisher, executive director of Human Resources Administration for Trump Entertainment Resorts. "We believe success is best achieved through a multi-pronged approach – by educating our employees and providing them with effective tools in managing their health, quality benefits with a strong wellness plan design, and with BTE's help, engaging and rewarding doctors who provide our employees and their families with the highest standard of care."

The physician community has also been receptive to BTE's arrival, with efforts championed by medical groups such as Partners In Care, Corp. (PIC) and Vista Health System IPA. Both organizations have endorsed and worked to actively drive implementation of BTE in New Jersey.

"BTE's programs have shown great promise and that's why PIC has been an early advocate of their approach," said Steven Goldberg, MD, chairman of the Board of Directors, Partners In Care, Corp. "We need more employers and insurance companies to support those physicians who have made the effort to provide better care."

The expansion of the BTE program into New Jersey has the potential to impact 645,000 total covered individuals from the initial participating employer purchasers.

Diabetes Care Link

The DCL program is designed to improve the quality of care for patients with diabetes. Physicians who demonstrate they are top performers in diabetes care and employ standards established by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (such as blood pressure and cholesterol control as well as annual foot and eye exams) can earn up to \$100 for each diabetic patient covered by a participating employer. Participating employers fund these incentives from the savings they achieve through lower health care costs and increased employee productivity that results from delivery of higher quality diabetes care. The group will begin paying rewards in 2008.

"Improving the management of patients with chronic conditions is a national imperative," said Francois de Brantes, BTE CEO. "New Jersey employers and health plans have taken an important step towards meeting that imperative by shifting a portion of physician revenue on delivering good care results. We encourage all employers in the State to follow these leaders."

For more information on Bridges to Excellence or to find out how to participate as an employer or a physician, visit www.bridgestoexcellence.org.

About Bridges to Excellence

Bridges to Excellence (BTE) is a non-profit coalition-based organization created to encourage significant leaps in the quality of care by recognizing and rewarding health care providers who demonstrate that they deliver safe, timely, effective, and patient-centered care. BTE works with large employers, health plans, providers and a wide range of organizations that have a shared goal of improving quality and patient outcomes. For more information, visit www.bridgestoexcellence.org.

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