



Working Together for an Affordable Future

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Health Innovators Chart Path to Lower Health Costs**

*NCHC Forum on Capitol Hill features Employer and Health Plan Successes*

Two private sector innovators took their successful approaches for reducing health costs and improving care to Capitol Hill today in a National Coalition on Health Care Forum.

The event featured presentations from Tom Leyden of Blue-Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) and Larry Boress of the Midwest Business Group on Health. Leyden has spearheaded collaborative quality improvement efforts, and Boress has worked with employers to curb the financial and human costs of diabetes.

"As policymakers work to keep federal health care programs on a sustainable footing, successful initiatives like these can help point the way toward a health system we can all afford," said event moderator and NCHC President and CEO John Rother.

Leyden, Director of Value Partnerships for BCBSM, briefed an audience of staffers from congressional offices and stakeholder organizations on his organization's nationally recognized work to reduce medical errors, promote high quality care and improve care coordination for Michigan patients. BCBSM's initiative around patient-centered medical homes has already yielded a 22 percent reduction in costly hospital admissions.

"Reducing health costs while increasing quality is an achievable goal with the right players and incentives. With the active collaboration of our physician and hospital partners across Michigan, we took on the root causes of high costs in the health care system. Together, we have empowered physicians to transform their practices across many levels of the health care system from primary care to hospital care. The work is hard, but the payout for BCBSM, our customers, our provider partners and our members is substantial," said Leyden.

Boress, the President and CEO of the Midwest Business Group on Health, focused his presentation on an innovative effort known as Take Control of Your Health. The Midwest Business Group on Health and the Illinois Pharmacists Association partnered to provide employees suffering from diabetes with personalized

health coaching from specially trained clinical pharmacists. The results have substantially improved health for workers and lowered costs for their employers.

According to Boress, “The key to improved health and lower cost is getting those with chronic disease to gain confidence and skills to take control and responsibility for their condition.”

Today’s event is the second in an ongoing series of National Coalition on Health Care Forums on Capitol Hill designed to stimulate dialogue around key health care issues.

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*The National Coalition on Health Care, the oldest and most diverse group working to achieve comprehensive health system reform, is a 501(c)(3) organization representing more than 80 participating organizations, including medical societies, businesses, unions, health care providers, faith-based associations, pension and health funds, insurers and groups representing consumers, patients women , minorities and persons with disabilities. Member organizations collectively represent – as employees, members, or congregants – over 100 million Americans.*

*Some members of the National Coalition Health Care (NCHC) do not, or cannot, take positions either on specific legislation, strategies or on any policies outside their respective mission areas. However, all that can, do endorse broad policy positions in support of comprehensive health system change.*