

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ohio KePRO Celebrates 10 Years as Ohio's Medicare Quality Improvement Organization

Seven Hills, OH – August 1, 2009 marks Ohio KePRO's 10th anniversary as the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) in Ohio. For the past ten years, the QIO has worked under contract to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to improve the health and protect the rights of the state's 1.8 million Medicare beneficiaries. Ohio KePRO's Vice President of Public Programs, Gayle Smith, RN, MBA, noted, "We're proud to have worked together with providers to improve the quality of healthcare for Medicare beneficiaries over the past decade. Our focus remains on continuous improvement in an ever-changing healthcare environment."

Ohio KePRO works toward the CMS goal of the right care for every person, every time by providing quality improvement and medical case review services:

- **Quality Improvement**

We collaborate with healthcare providers and stakeholders to improve the quality and efficiency of care. Ohio KePRO quality improvement professionals provide consultation services, training, and other resources to support Ohio healthcare providers in these efforts.

- **Medical Case Review**

We review medical cases as requested by Medicare beneficiaries, Medicare, or designated hospital staff members. These case reviews include beneficiary complaints, coverage and discharge appeals, hospital admissions, continued stays, and quality of care concerns.

Over the past decade, Ohio KePRO has worked with providers and beneficiaries in rural and urban areas statewide. We currently have ties with 142 nursing home and hospital facilities and nearly 100 primary care practices, including Summit County Internists, Good Samaritan Hospital, Sycamore Medical Center, Adkins Care Centers, Heritage Care Centers, Alliance Primary Care, and Ohio Medical Group.

Ohio KePRO operates a toll-free Medicare Beneficiary helpline (1-800-589-7337), available seven days a week; our case review services are free for Ohioans with Medicare. Since 1999, our helpline staff has fielded more than 36,000 calls.

An online media kit, including Ohio KePRO and QIO Program highlights from the past decade, project updates, and an overview of the QIO Program, is available at www.ohiokepro.com. Our Web site also offers tools and resources for Medicare beneficiaries and healthcare providers related to Medicare priorities in the areas of Beneficiary Protection, Patient Safety, and Prevention, including pressure ulcer prevention and treatment, drug safety, and breast cancer and colorectal cancer screening.

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