

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE October 9, 2009

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Consumers Compare Virginia HMOs on Quality and Satisfaction—Scores Improve in Newest Report

Richmond, Virginia—**Virginia Health Information (VHI)**, a nonprofit health information company, reports HMO quality and satisfaction reports at www.vhi.org.

HMOs have over one million members in Virginia. From October to January many members choose their health insurance plan for the upcoming year. **VHI** is an independent source of HMO information to help consumers compare HMOs on both costs and quality. The measurements include whether members get the right care for diabetes, heart disease, asthma and other conditions. Satisfaction scores show whether members are satisfied with their doctor, the care members received and how quickly they get the care they need.

Virginia HMOs performed better than the U.S. averages on 60% of quality measures. Virginia HMOs also improved their scores in 74% of the measures in **VHI's** report. "When HMOs improve quality, their members are the winners" says Michael Lundberg, **VHI's** Executive Director.

HMOs had very high scores for many measures:

- ✓ 93% of persons with asthma received asthma medications
- ✓ 93% of adults saw a doctor for preventive or other care
- ✓ 93% of pregnant women had care during their first trimester (1st 6 weeks) of pregnancy they were enrolled in an HMO
- ✓ 92% of members said their doctors always communicated clearly, listened to them and spent enough time with them

Some measures need improvement:

- ✗ 69% of women had breast cancer screening—this rate has improved very little since 2004
- ✗ 82% of women were screened for cervical cancer—a rate lower now than in 2004
- ✗ 62% of men had colorectal cancer screening—too low but improving each year

Cost and financial information includes the average monthly premium for members and spending on medical care and administrative expenses:

- \$ Monthly premiums per member per month averaged \$287. The lowest amount was \$238, highest \$321—a difference of 34%
- \$ 5 HMOs have profit/loss ratios over 10%
- \$ 4 HMOs had profit/loss ratios of less than 1%

VHI's HMO Finder lists all HMOs serving a city or county. *Compare HMOs* lets visitors compare all HMOs on almost 60 measures like mental health care, cardiovascular disease, highly qualified physicians and premiums. *HMO Profile* lists all information for a particular HMO. Links to many HMO websites allow for rate quotes and plan descriptions.

Virginia Health Information is the nonprofit organization the Commonwealth of Virginia and businesses go to for consumer and business health information. **VHI** information also includes hospitals, physicians, nursing facilities and other health care providers. Visit www.vhi.org or call toll free 1-877 VHI-INFO.

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