

Letter from Secretary Mike Leavitt to CEOs

Dear CEO:

I am writing to invite you to play a leadership role in the movement toward transparency and value-driven healthcare purchasing. We all celebrate the advances in medicine that help us live longer and healthier lives. At the same time, we also know the challenges that our healthcare sector faces and realize that our healthcare dollars could be spent more effectively.

In August of this year, President Bush signed an Executive Order committing Federal health programs to provide meaningful, consistent information on both the quality and price of healthcare services. Under this initiative, participants in Federal health programs will be able to access quality and price information about the health care they receive. By making this information available, all stakeholders in the healthcare system will have better tools and incentives to improve care and maximize the value of their healthcare purchases.

I am asking you to support the four "cornerstone" actions of the recent Executive Order – interoperable health IT; transparency of quality; transparency of price; and incentives for high-value health care, thus building upon the good work already underway by the private sector and by broad-based, public-private collaborations. The Federal government and America's employers, working with health insurance plans and healthcare providers, can help bring about uniform, consensus-based approaches for measuring the quality and cost or price of care and provide this information to consumers to help them make informed and confident healthcare choices. This information is critical to the growing number of Americans who are enrolling in consumer-directed health plans and is essential for improving patient care and enhancing the effectiveness of our healthcare system.

I encourage you to support the transformation of our healthcare system through the four cornerstones of value-driven health care by signing the Purchaser Statement of Support. This Statement of Support and other useful information can be found in this packet or online at: www.hhs.gov/transparency. If you have further questions, please contact HHS Value-driven Health Care at (202) 205-5552 or valuedriven@hhs.gov.

Sincerely,

Michael O. Leavitt, Secretary
U.S. Department of Health Human Services

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