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Green Bay

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Madison

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Gundersen Lutheran
La Crosse

Marshfield Clinic
Marshfield

Medical College
of Wisconsin
Milwaukee

St. Marys Hospital
Medical Center
Madison

Saint Joseph's
Hospital
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**WEA TRUST NAMED EXCLUSIVE WEB SITE SPONSOR
FOR THE WISCONSIN COLLABORATIVE
FOR HEALTHCARE QUALITY, INC.**

Site Will Further Promote Healthcare Accountability and Transparency

MADISON, WISCONSIN (November 6, 2003) – WEA Trust announced today that it will be the exclusive sponsor of the Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality's Web site. The interactive Web site will allow employers and consumers easy access to healthcare quality data being publicly reported by the statewide collaborating organizations.

"We believe the work of the Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality is an important step to improving healthcare in Wisconsin," said Al Jacobs, executive director, of the Trust. "The real value of the Collaborative to Wisconsin healthcare consumers is its ability to drive healthcare improvement with a set of common measures."

"The Collaborative is thankful for the financial support of the Trust," said Don Logan, chief medical officer, Dean Health System, Madison, and Collaborative executive committee member. "Publicly reporting on healthcare quality measures is only one step. Making sure the information is useful and accessible is equally important. The Trust's support will allow the Collaborative to broadly disseminate information."

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“As the second largest group health insurer in Wisconsin, we fully support the Collaborative in its goal of educating people about the value of measuring healthcare quality and using that information to make purchasing decisions,” said Janice Virlee, chairperson of WEA Trust Board of Trustees. “When our members make educated choices in seeking healthcare, they have better outcomes, which assist in keeping healthcare costs down.”

The Collaborative’s current Web site, www.wiqualitycollaborative.org, will remain available while the new site is being developed. The goal is to develop a state-of-the-art site that allows viewers to create custom reports specifying comparison of the healthcare providers and measures of their choice. Development will begin in the first quarter of 2004. The fully functional site is scheduled to be available in October 2004 in time for the publication of the updated Performance & Progress Report.

Headquartered in Madison, Wis., the Trust is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to building financial security for Wisconsin's public school employees. A Board of Trustees, made up of public school employees, oversees the Trust operations and serves without financial compensation. As educators, they understand the needs of public school employees, and are able to use that knowledge to ensure that the Trust members get high quality and great value in insurance and financial services.

The Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality is a group of seven hospitals, six physician organizations, four health plans, employers, and labor organizations from geographically balanced regions of the state that have come together to develop and share best practices and quality outcomes. The Collaborative published its first Performance & Progress Report, which includes an initial set of 42 comparative measures of healthcare quality and details the performance of participating healthcare organizations. The work of the Collaborative, organized in 2003, is based on the principle that by focusing on improving quality, better care for patients and more rational costs will result.

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The sponsoring members of the Collaborative include Bellin Health in Green Bay, Wis., Dean Health System in Madison, Wis., Froedert Hospital in Milwaukee, Gundersen Lutheran in La Crosse, Wis., Marshfield Clinic in Marshfield, Wis., Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, St. Marys Hospital Medical Center in Madison, Wis., Saint Joseph's Hospital in Marshfield, Wis., and ThedaCare in Appleton, Wis.

Business and labor partners include The Alliance, Appleton Papers, Badger Meter, DaimlerChrysler, Schneider National, Sentry Insurance, Serigraph, Inc., The Trane Company, United Auto Workers and Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce.

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