



Alan Levine
Secretary

NEWS RELEASE

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DHH Appoints Panel To Improve Transparency In Health Care

Select industry leaders to advise implementation of Consumer's Right to Know Act

BATON ROUGE –Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) Secretary Alan Levine announced today the appointment of a statutorily created advisory panel to guide the department in successfully implementing the Louisiana Consumer's Right to Know Act, which will give Louisiana health care consumers expanded, Web-based access to reliable information on the cost, quality and performance of their health care providers and health plans.

The Consumer's Right to Know Act, created by Senate Bill 287 of the 2008 Regular Legislative Session, authorizes the department to collect and publish a broad range of health care information on the Internet. The bill was proposed by Governor Bobby Jindal and State Sen. Willie Mount, chair of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee. The panel consists of representatives from consumer, technology, academic and health care organizations.

The initiative is being led by Lucas Tramontozzi, a former analyst for Hackensack University Medical Center in New Jersey, who is now a program manager in DHH's Bureau of Policy, Research and Program Development. In New Jersey, Tramontozzi worked closely with the medical center administration, health plans, health systems and regulatory agencies to perform business impact analyses on quality improvement initiatives and forecast the impact of changes in public reporting programs. Hackensack Medical Center has received numerous quality awards, including recognition by U.S. News and World Report as one of America's best hospitals for heart services, Healthgrades Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence and recognition by Child Magazine as the top-ranked children's hospital in New Jersey.

"Transparency in cost and outcomes has the dual impact of improving quality and reducing cost," said Levine. "We have selected people with the expertise and background to give us the best advice and we are grateful for their willingness to serve. We also have selected someone to lead the initiative who comes from an organization clearly unbridled in its commitment to quality and performance. I know Lucas will bring terrific ideas from the great work he did at Hackensack."

The Health Data Panel will also advise the agency on best practices in data collection, risk adjustment of the data to ensure appropriate comparisons, and establishment of the best template for the Web site.

Under the Act, DHH will create a Web site that publishes key performance data on health care providers and health plans, including—at a minimum—death rates, readmission rates, dozens of nationally accepted quality and performance measures for health plans, complication rates for procedures, average cost for procedures and the number of procedures a given provider has performed. This information will allow consumers to compare providers across a range of performance categories and make their health care buying decisions armed with objective information.

Committee members include:

- Philip Aucoin
Past President, Louisiana Pharmacists Association; past member, Louisiana Board of Pharmacy;
Pharmacist, Winn Dixie
- Eric T. Baumgartner, M.D., M.P.H.
Director, Policy and Program Planning, Louisiana Public Health Institute
- Danielle P. Berthelot, RHIA
Leadership and Advocacy Strategy Manager, Louisiana Health Information Management
Association;
HIM Director and Cancer Registry Privacy Officer, Woman's Hospital
- Joseph E. Bisordi, M.D., FACP
Chief Medical Officer, Ochsner Health System
- Walter Brock
Vice President, Administration, Capital Valve and Fitting Co.;
Board Member, Louisiana Business Group on Health
- Claudia Campbell, Ph.D.
Professor, MPH Program Director and Co-Director, Center for Health Equality Research,
Tulane University, School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine
- Edie Castello
Vice President/Chief Operating Officer, Louisiana Health Care Review
- Julie A. Catellier, RN, M.P.A.
Medical Center Director, Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System
- Diane Davidson
Employee Benefits Manager, Roy O Martin Lumber Company
- M. Bryan Day – *Appointed as Vice Chair of the Panel*
Regional Sr. Vice President, Promise Health Care, Inc.
- Rudy Gomez
Partner, SSA Consultants
- Sabrina Heltz, ASA, MAAA – *Appointed as Chair of the Panel*
Senior Vice President, Healthcare System Quality, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana
- Trenton James, II, M.D.
Former Vice President, Louisiana State Medical Society
- Patricia T. "Tatsy" Jeter, C.P.A., FACHE
Senior Vice President & Chief Financial Officer, Louisiana Hospital Association
- Randal Johnson
President, Louisiana Independent Pharmacies Association
- Gwen Laury
Director of Quality Improvement and Assurance, Louisiana Primary Care Association
- Kristie Marino
Assistant Vice President of Decision Support, Peoples Health
- Linda Matessino, B.S.N., RN, M.P.H.
Chief Executive Officer, Innis Community Health Center, Inc.
- Nancy McPherson
Senior State Director, AARP Louisiana
- Frank Opelka, M.D., FACS
AQA Member & Associate Dean of Healthcare Quality and Management, LSU Health Sciences
Center

- Susan T. Pierce, Ed.D., M.S.N., RN, CNE
Associate Professor, College of Nursing at Northwestern State University
- Shannon Robshaw, M.S.W.
Executive Director, Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum
- Anne Shirley
Director of Communications, Louisiana Nursing Home Association
- Ashley Stewart, M.P.H.
Evaluation Officer, The Rapides Foundation
- Jeff Williams
Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administration, Louisiana State Medical Society
- Karen Reiners Winfrey
Deputy Commissioner, Office of Health Insurance, Louisiana Department of Insurance

The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals serves to protect and promote health statewide and to ensure access to medical, preventive and rehabilitative services for all state citizens. To learn more about DHH, visit <http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov>.

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