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Virginia Business Coalition on Health Launches Pilot to Help Virginia Employers Improve Health of Employees and their Families

Virginia Health Strategy Project furthers value based benefit programs to promote wellness and prevention and manage health care costs

Virginia Beach, VA, May 6, 2010 – The Virginia Business Coalition on Health (VBCH), a member of the National Business Coalition on Health (NBCH), announced that it has been selected as one of five coalitions nationally to pilot a program named the *Virginia Health Strategy Project* to assist area employers in coordinating and aligning their health benefits to improve health. The Virginia initiative will help employers improve the health of their employees and their families through value based benefits (VBB). VBB is an approach used by employers to ensure their workforce has access to high quality, evidence-based and cost-effective health care by reducing barriers (such as waived co-pays) to essential services.

The pilot is part of the national *American Health Strategy Project*, launched by the National Business Coalition on Health in cooperation with Pfizer Inc. The initiative will provide both hands-on technical and financial support to assist the VBCH and their employer members in developing a complementary array of employee health offerings and incentives that better align health promotion and prevention strategies with medical and pharmaceutical plans, and other benefits such as disability, and workers' compensation.

“We are thrilled to be part of a national initiative with four of our peer coalitions to educate benefit managers on why a value based approach to employee health benefit purchasing is needed,” says Dr. Barbara Wallace, President and CEO, VBCH. “This initiative will provide a

much needed service for our members by introducing them to state of the art tools, resources and skills to navigate the complex world of health benefits purchasing.”

The project originated through the Kansas City Mid-America Coalition on Health Care, a NBCH member coalition, working over a three year program with 16 regional and national employers and Pfizer Inc. The initiative has now developed a replicable model that helps employers to identify programs that offer high value, promote employee wellness and prevention, manage long-term health care costs and improve the health of employees and their families through benefit design strategies and health improvement programs.

“Employers fund almost 60 percent of health care in the United States, often without understanding how to fully measure the value of their health investments,” said Andrew Webber, President and CEO, NBCH. “As health care costs continue to rise, more employers are recognizing the value of tailoring benefits to the health risks within their employee populations. Employers often lack the tools and models needed to collect and interpret data across a broad range of activities to make better and more informed health benefit decisions for their workforce and we hope to help overcome those barriers with this project.”

About Pfizer Inc

Pfizer applies its science and global resources to improve health and well-being at every stage of life. Consistent with Pfizer’s responsibility as the world’s leading biopharmaceutical company, Pfizer also collaborates with health care providers, governments and local communities to support and expand access to reliable, affordable health care around the world. For more than 150 years, Pfizer has worked to make a difference for all who rely on the company. For additional information visit: www.pfizer.com.

About the National Business Coalition on Health

NBCH is a national, non-profit, membership organization of 60 business and health coalitions, representing over 7,000 employers and 25 million employees and their dependents across the United States. NBCH and its members are dedicated to value-based purchasing of health care services through the collective action of public and private purchasers. For additional information visit: www.nbch.org.

About the Virginia Business Coalition on Health

The Virginia Business Coalition on Health (VBCH) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), catalyst-coalition founded in 1983 under the name of the Hampton Roads Health Coalition and expanded Virginia-wide in 2006. VBCH is a member of the National Business Coalition on Health, the National Quality Forum, The Leapfrog Group. VBCH unites employers through adoption of value-based benefits-design to improve wellness in the worksite and general community, health plan quality and hospital patient safety and quality. Programs include the Wellness in the Workplace Awards, eValue8 Health Plan RFI Evaluation, the Leapfrog Hospital Survey, Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention ToolKit for Employers, HealthMapRx™ Diabetes Coaching, Diabetes Resources Directory, education and communication to promote best practices. VBCH is a mixed-model member coalition of stakeholder purchasers (employers) and providers, representing 300,000 employees and their dependents. For more information about VBCH, visit www.myVBCH.org or phone 757-552-0913.

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