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“Guided Care” Receives Award for Innovation in Practice Improvement

Guided Care, a new model of comprehensive health care for people with multiple chronic conditions, has received the 2009 Medical Economics Award for Innovation in Practice Improvement from the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM) and *Medical Economics* magazine. Chad Boulton, MD, MPH, MBA, principal investigator of the Guided Care study and director of the Roger C. Lipitz Center for Integrated Health Care at the **Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health**, accepted the award at the STFM’s annual Conference on Practice Improvement, held last week in Kansas City, Missouri. Early research results suggest that Guided Care improves the quality of care and reduces costs for older adults suffering from multiple chronic health conditions.

“I am honored to accept this award on behalf of the many researchers, doctors, nurses, patients and family caregivers who have made Guided Care an option for helping the 133 million Americans with chronic conditions to lead healthier lives,” said Dr. Boulton.

The Guided Care model was developed by a team of researchers at the Bloomberg School, the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing and the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and is designed to improve patients’ quality of life and care, while improving the efficiency of treating the sickest and most complex patients. The care teams include a registered nurse, two to five physicians, and other members of the office staff who work closely to monitor each patient’s health and offers comprehensive, coordinated, patient-centered health care.

A recently published study in the *American Journal of Managed Care* showed that in the first eight months of a randomized controlled trial, Guided Care patients spent less time in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities and had fewer emergency room visits and home health episodes,

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resulting in an annual net savings of \$75,000 per Guided Care nurse. Other analyses have shown that Guided Care improves the quality of patients' care, reduces family caregiver strain, and improves physicians' satisfaction with chronic care. Guided Care also won the American Public Health Association's 2008 Archstone Foundation Award for Excellence in Program Innovation, which recognizes one innovative model of health care for older Americans each year.

"Guided Care has increased the efficiency of our team and of patients' office visits, as well as improved our access to evidence-based guidelines for managing chronic conditions," said Gary Noronha, MD, FACP, medical director of Wyman Park Internal Medicine, part of Johns Hopkins Community Physicians. "Our physicians agree that we now have the right mix of professionals to meet the needs of these vulnerable patients."

The Society of Teachers of Family Medicine presents the annual award to a health professional or not-for-profit organization that has developed innovative practice improvement programs and strategies that transform medical office processes, promote patient participation, and contribute to an office practice's overall success. The award acknowledges creative, cutting-edge strategies developed to effectively redesign an office-based practice and promote patient participation and practice growth.

The Society of Teachers of Family Medicine represents a membership of nearly 5,000 teachers of family medicine. These teachers include medical school professors, preceptors, residency program faculty, residency program directors and all involved in family medicine education. The award is co-sponsored by *Medical Economics*, a twice-monthly publication that provides physicians with the practical information and expert advice they need to successfully manage their medical practices, their personal finances, and their professional careers.

The research and development of Guided Care has been supported by a public-private partnership of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the National Institute on Aging, the John A. Hartford Foundation, the Jacob and Valeria Langeloth Foundation, Kaiser Permanente Mid-Atlantic States Region, Johns Hopkins HealthCare, and the Roger C. Liptiz Center for Integrated Health Care. For more information, please go to: www.GuidedCare.org.