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HEALTH PROVIDERS, INSURERS, DRUG AND DEVICE MANUFACTURERS AND PATIENT GROUPS REACH AGREEMENT ON SIX IMMEDIATE STEPS TO IMPROVE U.S. HEALTHCARE

Report on ‘Viable Solutions’ recommends immediate actions to remove obstacles to innovation, improve healthcare system quality and value

WASHINGTON, DC – Leaders from all sectors of U.S. healthcare, working in collaboration with patient advocacy organizations, today recommended six steps – including Food and Drug Administration reforms, changes to fraud and abuse laws and accelerated progress toward a nationwide health information system – that the Obama Administration, Congress and the healthcare industry can begin implementing immediately to improve the nation’s healthcare system.

At a Capitol Hill briefing to announce the recommendations, health industry and patient advocacy leaders, under the auspices of the Healthcare Leadership Council’s National Dialogue for Healthcare Innovation initiative, emphasized that the reforms should win bipartisan support and can gain traction even in an election year permeated with partisan politics. The ‘Viable Solutions’ call for:

- A firm date of December 31, 2018 to achieve nationwide health information interoperability with the private sector leading efforts to enable healthcare organizations to share data with each other;
- A series of reforms to further improve the efficacy of the Food and Drug Administration, in part by reducing administrative burdens imposed on the agency, and bring innovative, life-saving treatments and technologies to patients more rapidly;
- Implementation by Medicare, insurers and healthcare providers of best practices to improve all aspects of care for chronically ill patients.
- The federal government to reform outdated physician self-referral and anti-kickback statutes, as well as expand Medicare payment waiver policies, to enable better care coordination while protecting against fraud and abuse.
- Congress, the Administration and states to standardize the nation’s privacy laws and improve access to patient data for quality healthcare and medical research.
- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to improve its Enhanced Medication Therapy Management Model to help the program deliver on the promise of improving patients’ health.

“These steps aren’t revolutionary, but they are transformative,” said HLC president Mary R. Grealy. “Innovation is too often put on the back burner when we discuss healthcare policy, but it’s critical to elevating health system value, to addressing quality and cost challenges. There are viable, practical, common-sense solutions that can and should be implemented to help make our healthcare system more patient-centered and effective.”

HLC’s National Dialogue for Healthcare Innovation convened senior leaders from its membership comprised of companies from all healthcare sectors and engaged patient groups and key industry voices to develop the recommendations over a period of several months, following a national summit on innovation and value held in Washington, D.C. last March. The final report and recommendations were produced in partnership with NORC, the independent public policy research organization at the University of Chicago.

“It is a rare achievement to bring so many diverse stakeholders together in consensus on issues of such importance,” said Susan DeVore, president and CEO of Premier, Inc. and HLC chair. “There is a widespread understanding that, for all of our healthcare system’s considerable strengths, we need to make strides in providing high-quality care at sustainable costs. The six steps on which we have reached agreement will move us significantly in that direction.”

Ms. Grealy said the Healthcare Leadership Council has already begun meeting with congressional leaders regarding the recommendations and would continue those conversations in the weeks ahead.

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The Healthcare Leadership Council (HLC), a coalition of chief executives from all disciplines within American healthcare, is the exclusive forum for the nation’s healthcare leaders to jointly develop policies, plans, and programs to achieve their vision of a 21st century system that makes affordable, high-quality care accessible to all Americans. Follow us on Twitter at @HealthInFocus.