FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PQA Endorses New Performance Measures To Address Opioid Misuse/Abuse

Springfield, VA (May 18, 2015) – The membership of the Pharmacy Quality Alliance (PQA) has endorsed three new performance measures that assess the use of opioids from multiple providers or at high dosage in persons without cancer. Abuse and overdose of prescription opioids has grown to become a major public health issue in the United States. Studies have shown that people who receive high doses of opioids or prescriptions from multiple prescribers and use multiple pharmacies are more likely to die of drug overdoses. As such, the PQA measures are an important addition to ongoing efforts to address this epidemic.

PQA’s newly endorsed measures:
1. The first measure assesses populations that are receiving prescriptions for opioids at a high dose that could be inappropriate or could contribute to an adverse event.
2. The second measure assesses populations that are receiving opioid prescriptions from multiple prescribers and multiple pharmacies, which may indicate uncoordinated care and/or doctor/pharmacy shopping.
3. The third measure includes criteria of both high dose opioids and also receiving prescriptions from multiple providers – which may indicate misuse, abuse, or inappropriate and/or fragmented care.

During testing, the PQA measure rates were calculated for five plans, including one Commercial, three Medicare Advantage (MA-PDs), and one stand-alone Prescription Drug Plan (PDP). Testing revealed substantial variability across these plans, and patterns that may prove useful in designing interventions. PQA collaborated with RxAnte to test the new opioid utilization measures, utilizing data from Aetna and WellCare. Testing is a key step in the measure development process, and having several testing partners allows PQA the opportunity to identify how draft measures perform across different health plans – an important step in our measure validation process.

“Abuse and overdose of prescription opioids is a major public health issue in the US. These measures will become important tools used in addition to other federal and state-based monitoring systems,” said Woody Eisenberg, MD, Senior Vice President for PQA.
“Unsafe use of prescription opioids is a growing epidemic that costs the U.S. an estimated $70 billion annually and leads to nearly 100,000 avoidable ER visits each year,” said Josh Benner, PharmD, ScD, founder of RxAnte and Executive Vice President of Strategy at Millennium Health. “We are pleased to collaborate with PQA, Aetna and WellCare on these new performance measures which will help to establish the foundation for addressing this important public health issue.”

“WellCare is pleased to partner with PQA to support its efforts to create appropriate performance measures to guide the development of policies and practices that best protect our members and enable them to live better, healthier lives,” said Laura Hungiville, WellCare’s Chief Pharmacy Officer.

About PQA:
Established in 2006, PQA represents pharmacy providers, pharmacy benefit managers, health plans, academia, consumer advocates, community pharmacies, health technology vendors, pharmaceutical research and manufacturing companies, and other stakeholders interested in improving the quality of the medication-use system.

PQA's mission is to:

* Improve the quality of medication management and use across health care settings with the goal of improving patients' health through a collaborative process to develop and implement performance measures and recognize examples of exceptional pharmacy quality.*

PQA provides a leadership role in identification and selection of metrics for evaluating the quality of the medication-use system, provides education on quality improvement, and connects pharmacists to healthcare improvement initiatives. For more information about the Pharmacy Quality Alliance, please visit [www.PQAalliance.org](http://www.PQAalliance.org) or contact us at 703-690-1987.

About RxAnte®:
RxAnte is the leading platform for improving medication use and drug therapy outcomes through predictive analytics and targeted clinical programs. Its innovative and proven approach to prediction-driven drug therapy management helps health plans, healthcare professionals, and the patients they serve get more from medicines. Created by subject matter experts, RxAnte’s patent-pending predictive analytics, intervention decision support, and online workflow solutions work together to let health care payers and providers know the future—then change it. RxAnte is a wholly owned subsidiary of Millennium Health. Learn more at [www.rxante.com](http://www.rxante.com) or follow us on Twitter.

About Aetna:
Aetna is one of the nation's leading diversified health care benefits companies, serving an estimated 46 million people with information and resources to help them make better informed decisions about their health care. Aetna offers a broad range of traditional, voluntary and consumer-directed health insurance products and related services, including medical, pharmacy, dental, behavioral health, group life and disability plans, and medical management capabilities, Medicaid health care management services, workers' compensation administrative services and
health information technology products and services. Aetna's customers include employer
groups, individuals, college students, part-time and hourly workers, health plans, health care
providers, governmental units, government-sponsored plans, labor groups and expatriates. For
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world. @AetnaNews.

About WellCare Health Plans, Inc.:
Headquartered in Tampa, Fla., WellCare Health Plans, Inc. (NYSE: WCG) focuses exclusively
on providing government-sponsored managed care services, primarily through Medicaid,
Medicare Advantage and Medicare Prescription Drug Plans, to families, children, seniors and
individuals with complex medical needs. The Company serves approximately 3.8 million
members nationwide as of March 31, 2015. For more information about WellCare, please visit
the Company’s website at www.wellcare.com or view the company’s videos at
https://www.youtube.com/user/WellCareHealthPlan.