

permanente in the news

A compilation of news, significant awards, and accomplishments about Permanente clinicians and employees and the Permanente Medical Groups.

KP News Roundup

Kaiser Permanente (KP) Colorado is One of Nation's Top Ten Health Plans, Says NCQA; Other Regions Receive High Regional Ratings



For the second consecutive year, the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) has named KP **Colorado** to its list of the nation's top ten health plans for clinical care quality, in its recently released *Quality Compass 2004*.¹

The report also identifies the top five performers in each region. Both the **Georgia and Mid-Atlantic States Regions** were among the top five health plans in the South Atlantic Region; and the **Hawaii, Southern California, Northwest, and Northern California Regions** dominated the Pacific Region rankings.

KP's **Northwest Region** was named one of the top five West Coast health plans (out of 26 evaluated). When compared with 261 other health plans across the nation, they were 15th in customer service satisfaction, 12th in medical assistance with smoking cessation, and 11th on blood sugar monitoring for diabetics.

The **Georgia and Colorado Regions** also were awarded NCQA's highest accreditation status of "Excellent" for their HMO commercial and Medicare products.

KP's **Mid-Atlantic States and Georgia Regions** were named in the top five health plans for effectiveness of care in the nation's South Atlantic Region, which encompasses 44 plans stretching from Delaware to Florida. The Mid-Atlantic States earned eight Best of Class designations out of 32 clinical quality and prevention measures/sub-measures. The Best of Class designation, used as a benchmark of quality, is achieved for scores on clinical measures that are in the top 10% or above for plans nationwide.

NCQA is the premiere source for information about the quality of the nation's managed care plans. Its "Excellent" accreditation status is granted only to health plans that meet or exceed NCQA's rigorous requirements for consumer protection and quality improve-

ment and whose HEDIS results are in the highest range of national performance.

An independent nonprofit group that measures the quality of health care, NCQA accredits health plans and serves as a resource for purchasers, regulators, and consumers. The annual report is based on an analysis of health plan performance measures from its database of performance information of 563 health plans providing health care coverage to about 69 million Americans.

Northern California and Northwest Regions Win 2004 Lawrence Patient Safety Award



Two excellent patient safety projects focused on reducing medical errors have been awarded the Lawrence Patient Safety Award for 2004. Winning the first annual Lawrence Patient Safety Transfer Award is the **Northwest Region** Preoperative Briefing Project, a project to transform the patient safety culture in the region's operating rooms and reduce the number of medical errors, focusing on the number of burn injuries to patients. The Transfer Award, new this year, is given to the region that best replicates a prior year's winning project—in this case, the Anaheim Medical Center's Preoperative Briefing Program in the Southern California Region. The successful preoperative briefing project is now being transferred throughout the Northwest Region.

The **Northern California Region** won the second annual Lawrence Award with its Perinatal Patient Safety Project, a four-year pilot to reduce birth injuries caused by human error and systemic problems. The Perinatal Patient Safety Project (PPSP) was piloted at four sites using local multidisciplinary perinatal patient safety teams that were developed at each site and armed with training, tools, and data. The project continues in 2004 at four additional medical centers in Northern California: Redwood City, Vallejo, Sacramento, and South Sacramento. In 2005, the Oakland, Fresno, Santa Rosa, and Santa Clara Medical Centers will be added.

By Barbara Caruso, BA

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Care Management Institute Executive Director Honored for Visionary Work in Chronic Disease

Paul Wallace, MD, Executive Director of KP's Care Management Institute (CMI), was one of the recipients of the 2004 Vision Award at the Improving Chronic Illness Care (ICIC) Congress. Also honored was Jonathan B Perlin, MD, Acting Undersecretary for Health, and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The 2004 awards celebrate the pioneering work and positive impacts on the care of the chronically ill of KP and the Veterans Health Administration.

Care Management Institute and HealthMedia awarded an Honorable Mention C Everett Koop National Health Award for 2004

CMI and HealthMedia, Inc, have been awarded an honorable mention in the C Everett Koop National Health Award for 2004. The award, one of only two Koop Awards given, was for "Balance: A tailored, Internet-based weight management program."

The Koop Awards rank among the most prestigious awards for health improvement programs, requiring strong documentation of both health improvement and cost savings. For 2004, there was only one winning program, General Motors Corporation/UAW. Twenty-one programs were seriously considered this year.

CMI was the Co-Principal Investigator and funder for the study, known as THeME (Tailored Health Message), a randomizing controlled trial (RCT). CMI and HealthMedia also partnered in conducting the analysis and writeup of the findings. The THeME RCT tested the effectiveness of HealthMedia's Balance Program compared to user-navigated, non-tailored, Web-based weight management support in four KP regions.

The Balance program, along with other HealthMedia programs, is now available to KP members on the member Web site: www.kp.org.

KP Patient Safety Expert Newest Member of JCAHO Advisory Group

Suzanne Graham, RN, PhD, Patient Safety Director for the California Regions, is one of the newest members of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) Sentinel Event Advisory Group. Ms Graham accepted an invitation

to join the prestigious committee that recommends national Patient Safety Goals to JCAHO. Ms Graham, a well-known national patient safety expert, has served in multiple roles within KP at the medical center, regional, and national levels. She is a graduate of the University of North Carolina Kenan-Flager Business School, the KP Advanced Leadership Program, and the AHA Health Forum Patient Safety Leadership Fellowship Program.

The Sentinel Event Advisory Group consists of patient safety leaders from across the United States and has 23 members.

David Eddy, MD, Awarded Prestigious Award from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

David Eddy, MD, Senior Scientist for the Archimedes Project, has been awarded the prestigious "2005 Distinguished Achievement Award" from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in conjunction with its partners in the Institute for Quality in Laboratory Medicine (IQLM). The IQLM Awards Workgroup has acknowledged Dr Eddy's work as pioneering and for his contributions in health care.

Developed by the Biomathematics Unit of the Care Management Institute, Archimedes is a simulation model for health care that creates a "virtual reality" in which patients, providers, and institutions interact as they would in the real world.² This model allows physicians and researchers to quickly see the outcome of research and to study questions about best-treatment recommendations and cost of treatment.

The Permanente Medical Group (TPMG)

Santa Clara Medical Association Recognizes KP Physicians

Two physicians at the Santa Teresa Medical Center received awards from the Santa Clara County Medical Association. **Elizabeth Menkin, MD**, Geriatrician and Hospice Medical Director, Continuing Care Services, received the award for Outstanding Contribution in Community Service for her work with Coda Alliance. Coda Alliance promotes advance discussion of end-of-life care with families and health care providers.

Barry Miller, MD, retired, Orthopedics, received the Outstanding Contribution in Medical Education Award for teaching practical musculoskeletal assessment skills to primary care physicians.



Colorado Permanente Medical Group (CPMG)

KP Colorado Named State's Top Health Care Company

ColoradoBiz magazine, UMB Bank, and Deloitte & Touche recently named KP Colorado the state's top health care company at its 17th Annual Top Company of the Year Awards Luncheon.

The Top Company of the Year Awards honor companies who demonstrate outstanding achievements and performance in various industry categories.

Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group (MAPMG)

Mid-Atlantic States Leads the State in Quality

The Mid-Atlantic States Region received more *Star Performer* and *Above Average* scores than any other participating HMO and POS plan in the State of Maryland, according to *Measuring the Quality of HMO and POS Plans: 2004 Consumer Guide*, recently released by the Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC).

KP was named a *Star Performer* in 15 categories—11 more than the next-best health plan—and *Above Average* in 17 categories, nine more than the next highest scoring health plan.

The *Star Performer* rating is given to those HMOs who receive *Above Average* scores in specific measures for three consecutive years.

INOVA Fairfax Hospital Urology Department Ranked Number 37 in *US News and World Report* Survey

The INOVA Fairfax Hospital Urology Department was ranked number 37 in the *US News and World Report's* ranking of the top hospitals in 17 specialties.³ The department chair is **Stuart Katz, MD**, an MAPMG urologist. INOVA Fairfax is one of the region's core hospitals, with KP members accounting for a third to a half of the urology caseload at the hospital. The ranking is based on the volume of cases and the quality of care provided in terms of complications, morbidity, and mortality.

Janice Beaverson, MD, Named Associate Medical Director for Quality and Care Management

After 22 years with KP, **Janice Beaverson, MD**, has been named Associate Medical Director for Quality and Care Management, partnering with Kay Lewis, Vice

President of Quality for the Health Plan. Dr Beaverson and Ms Lewis will have joint accountability for ensuring quality for all aspects of operations.

MAPMG Physician Receives Immunization Excellence Award

Cynthia Joseph, MD, received the 2004 Maryland Immunization Excellence Award for her work implementing the KP Immunization Management (KIM) system and promoting the importance of adult and childhood immunizations locally and nationally.

KP Physician Named President of American Academy of Pediatrics Chapter

Leslie Ellwood, MD, FAAP, a pediatrician at the Fair Oaks Medical Center and former Chief of Pediatrics, Mid-Atlantic States Region, has been named President of the Virginia chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Southern California Permanente Medical Group (SCPMG)

KP Medical Teams Honored for Operation Smile

In recognition of the outstanding volunteer work provided by KP medical team members, KP received the 2004 Corporate Humanitarian Award at the celebrity-studded Third Annual Operation Smile Gala in Beverly Hills, California.

Presented by actor **Hector Elizondo**, the Corporate Humanitarian award was accepted by **Jeffrey A Weisz, MD**, Medical Director and Chairman of the Board, SCPMG, in honor of the 20 KP team members who took part in Operation Smile's humanitarian mission to surgically correct cleft palates and cleft lips in children around the world.

The KP surgeons, nurses, anesthesiologists and technicians honored by Operation Smile included West Los Angeles team members **Robert Rubin, MD; Andrew Wexler, MD; Touraj Touran, MD; Jon Plaisance, CRNA; Denice Klein, RN; Linda Scira, RN; Virginia DeCastro, RN; Karen Kennedy, RN; and Josephine Silbor, RN**; Woodland Hills team members **Labib Samarra, MD; James Yu, MD; Susan Storch, MD; Pariborz Namdari, MD; Stefanie Feldman, MD; Louis Sterling, Marina Goodsea, and Alicia Degroff**; and Panorama City team members **Mary L Wilson, MD, and Kerry Newman, MD**.

Nationally Acclaimed KP Dermatology Chief Paves Unique Medical Path

Nancy Jasso, MD, Chief of Dermatology, Panorama City, has been chosen to be prominently featured in “Changing the Face of Medicine,” an exhibit that recently opened at the NIH National Library of Medicine in Bethesda, Maryland.

Honoring the lives and achievements of women in medicine, the exhibit showcases how women physicians are serving in the highest ranks of the medical profession, caring for whole communities, and responding to new challenges in health care around the world. Dr Jasso is included in the exhibit for her commitment to providing quality care to her patients and for her role as one of the founding physicians of a laser tattoo-removal project for the San Fernando Valley Violence Prevention program, where she works as a volunteer each Saturday. Dr Jasso is also featured in the exhibit’s opening video presentation that includes seven distinguished physicians who have paved a unique path in the world of medicine. Find out more about the exhibit and view Dr Jasso’s video online at www.nlm.nih.gov/changingthefaceofmedicine/.

Study Concludes KP Cancer Care Ranks Among the Best

A KP study has shown that the surgical success rates of cancer patients who underwent reconstructive microvascular head and neck surgery at the KP Regional

Head, Neck & Skullbase Surgical Oncology Center compared favorably with success rates at highly respected and renowned cancer centers around the country. It also showed that KP patients spent less time in the hospital and recuperated more quickly.

This was the first study to compare an HMO with academic health centers providing tertiary surgical care and was performed using data from five flagship medical centers, all ranked among the 18 best head and neck programs in the US. The study was published in the June 21, 2004 edition of the *Archives of Otolaryngology—Head & Neck Surgery*, a publication of JAMA & Archives Journal.⁴ ♦

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Barbara Caruso compiled this material from *California Wire*, *Partner News*, and other PMG newsletters and sources. To submit news of physician or PMG awards and recognitions, contact Ms Caruso at barbara.caruso@kp.org.

Learn Something

Try to learn something about everything
and everything about something.

— Thomas Henry Huxley, 1825-95, biologist