



## News release from Michigan Health and Safety Coalition

**Contact:** Helen Stojic 313-225-8113

**Release:** Immediate

### **Report on How to Make Michigan Health Care Safer Highlighted at March 29 Conference in Troy**

*Recommendations include creating a Michigan Center for Safe Health Care*

**DETROIT, March 29, 2006**—A new report from the State Commission on Patient Safety will be highlighted at the fifth annual Michigan Health and Safety Coalition Patient Safety Conference being held Wednesday, March 29 at the Somerset Inn in Troy. The report will be discussed during a noon news media briefing and a 1:30 p.m. panel discussion.

The conference is sponsored by the Michigan Health and Safety Coalition, whose members were appointed to the state commission by Gov. Jennifer Granholm and charged with authoring the report.

The report's central recommendations include:

- Create a Michigan Center for Safe Health Care, a freestanding, nonprofit organization to coordinate efforts around the state to reduce patient harm. Several states have enacted legislation supporting the creation of such patient safety centers to address the problem of health care errors.
- Establish a statewide, confidential and non-punitive voluntary error reporting system. The Michigan Center for Safe Health Care would design, implement and manage the reporting system, which would be used to identify important areas for statewide improvement.
- Increase outreach to patients, their families and consumers in general to make them partners in patient safety. This would include an ongoing education campaign to improve health literacy and the understanding of patient safety.
- Address health care workforce shortages without compromising patient safety while improving practice environments and the availability of qualified health professionals.

- more -

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

DaimlerChrysler Corporation

Ford Motor Company

General Motors Corporation

International Union, UAW

Michigan Association of Health Plans

Michigan Consumer Health Care Coalition

Michigan Department of Community Health

Michigan Education Special Services Association

Michigan Health & Hospital Association

Michigan Nurses Association

Michigan Osteopathic Association

MPRO

Michigan Pharmacists Association

Michigan State Medical Society

27000 W. Eleven Mile Rd.  
Mail Code: B713  
Southfield, MI 48034  
Phone: 248.448.6266  
Fax: 248.448.0058  
E-mail: dvalade@bcbsm.com  
www.mihealthandsafety.org

Many of the recommendations can be implemented right away by health care providers, payers and consumers. Some of the recommendations will require action by the state legislature and governor.

In all, the report contains 13 major objectives, ranging from designing health care facilities and processes with safety in mind, to improved collaboration among health care organizations to promote patient safety.

“On behalf of the commission, I want to thank everyone who provided testimony and conducted research that helped create this report. Their contributions were invaluable,” said commission chair Tom Simmer, M.D., senior vice president and chief medical officer for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. “I also want to thank the commission members for their long hours and hard work, and the Michigan Department of Community Health for its valuable assistance.

“The end result is a report that leads us toward the goal of ensuring that in Michigan, every patient will receive safe care every time.”

Michigan Pharmacists Association CEO and commission vice chair Larry D. Wagenknecht, RPh, said: “This report is a road map to better and safer care in Michigan. If we follow the road map, I’m confident Michigan will end up as one of the nation’s leaders in patient safety.”

Beverley McDonald of the Michigan Consumer Health Care Coalition, and chair of the commission’s review panel, said, “the establishment of a patient safety center will keep patient safety on Michigan’s radar screen and accelerate the development of fail safe systems to avoid many health care errors in today’s delivery system.” She added that “from the consumer’s perspective, when safety is not assured, the advantages of new technologies and procedures fade away.”

Serving as the commission, the coalition held three public hearings to gather feedback on patient safety, and people unable to attend the hearings were invited to submit written testimony. A total of 77 individuals and organizations provided testimony that formed the basis of the commission’s recommendations.

The full report will be posted to **[www.mihealthandsafety.org](http://www.mihealthandsafety.org)** beginning at noon on March 29.

Michigan Health and Safety Coalition members include:

- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
- DaimlerChrysler Corporation
- Ford Motor Company
- General Motors Corporation
- International Union, UAW
- Michigan Association of Health Plans
- Michigan Consumer Health Care Coalition
- Michigan Department of Community Health
- Michigan Education Special Services Association (MESSA)
- Michigan Health & Hospital Association
- Michigan Nurses Association
- Michigan Osteopathic Association
- Michigan Pharmacists Association
- Michigan State Medical Society
- MPRO, Michigan's Healthcare Quality Improvement Organization

# # #