



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON DC

30 August 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR ALMAJCOM/SG  
ALMDW/CC  
ALMDG/CC

FROM: HQ USAF/SG  
1780 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1780

SUBJECT: Partnership for Patients

I fully support and share the commitment by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs to the Partnership for Patients (PfP) program. The PfP program is a public-private partnership for decreasing all forms of harm to patients and reducing preventable readmissions. The Air Force Medical Service will actively participate in this collaborative effort to make care safer, more reliable, and less costly. Our goals in the PfP program are to:

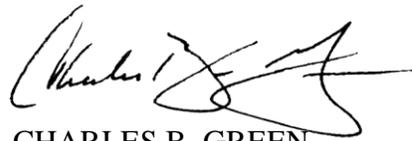
- a. Keep patients from getting injured or sicker. We will increase efforts to avoid and prevent patient harm in healthcare facilities. By the end of 2013, preventable facility-acquired conditions should **decrease by 40 percent** compared to 2010.
- b. Help patients heal without complication. We will improve continuity and effectiveness of care during transitions from one care setting to another and, thereby, decrease preventable hospital readmissions within 30 days of discharge. By the end of 2013, preventable complications during a transition from one care setting to another will be decreased, such that all hospital readmissions should be **reduced by 20 percent**, compared to 2010.

I ask you to join the shared effort to change the status quo because all harm is preventable. Together we can save thousands of lives, stop millions of injuries, and take important steps toward a more dependable and efficient healthcare system. To attain the goals of the PfP initiative we will align with other Federal and private sector health care systems through the following actions:

- a. We will continue developing measures of quality and safety, while bringing tools on-line to make the measures more visible. The collection of the best information in these areas will help us improve the care patients receive and provide better indicators for targeting efforts and decision making in our medical treatment facilities.
- b. We will learn from, and be a partner with other systems in techniques to foster improvements in healthcare safety, quality, and value. Through this effort we will develop and provide resources and tools for technical support to physicians, nurses, and other clinicians working in our healthcare facilities.

c. We will customize tools to meet the local needs of different settings and clinicians, in order to ensure that medical treatment facilities implement and use the tools that are proven to reduce facility acquired conditions and facilitate better care transitions. We will test implementation of care delivery models that make patient care safer and support effective transitions of patients from different healthcare settings.

As we move forward towards these goals, we need your ideas and leadership. The Partnership for Patients initiative will be important to our continued progress towards a patient-centered culture. Additional information will be forthcoming on the specifics of implementation plans to meet our goals. If you have any questions or concerns, my points of contact at the Air Force Medical Operations Agency, Clinical Quality Division (AFMOA/SGHQ) are Lt Col Beverly Thornberg, (210) 395-9325, DSN 969-9325 or beverly.thornberg@us.af.mil and Dr. Ricardo Villarreal, (210) 395-9069, DSN 969-9069 or ricardo.villarreal.5.ctr@us.af.mil.



CHARLES B. GREEN  
Lieutenant General, USAF, MC, CFS  
Surgeon General

Attachment:

Letter from Dr. Woodson, Asst Sec of Defense, dated June 7, 2011