

New Mexico Medical Review Association

NMMRA

News Release

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New Mexico Medical Review Association (NMMRA) and KRWG-TV to Help Remake American Medicine

Albuquerque, NM – The New Mexico Medical Review Association (NMMRA) – the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) in New Mexico – and Las Cruces-based Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) station KRWG-TV are working together on local activities to support the upcoming PBS primetime documentary *Remaking American Medicine™...Health Care for the 21st Century*. The documentary is expected to air in April 2006. KRWG was awarded one of 22 grants funded by the Amgen Foundation, lead corporate sponsor for the series and campaign. As a winning station, KRWG will work in conjunction with NMMRA and other partners to raise local awareness about the health care quality improvement movement, and to motivate community members to become advocates for improving care for themselves and their families.

Remaking American Medicine, a four-part PBS series, tells the stories of individuals and institutions struggling to address the often life-threatening problems Americans routinely encounter when dealing with the health care system and reveal what is being done to provide safer, more effective care. The series focuses on the advances being made in improving the quality of patient care and will feature profiles of providers and patients who are working together to change the way health care is delivered in this country.

Because diabetes has reached epidemic proportions in New Mexico, KRWG intends to address this issue by increasing awareness of the symptoms, helping to motivate diabetics to take control of their own care, and presenting simple lifestyle changes. A coalition involved in this project includes La Clinica de Familia's Promotora Program, the Cooperative Extension Service at New Mexico State University's College of Agriculture and Home Economics and NMMRA. KRWG plans two live call-in programs and will develop materials in both English and Spanish. The station will produce bilingual magnetic cards that will contain bullet points listing diabetes symptoms to watch for, as well as care and lifestyle pointers.

"KRWG is honored to participate in this project and partner with organizations that represent a valued and trusted presence in their respective communities," says Edith Treadwell, KRWG creative services manager. "We look forward to sharing the information and materials we develop with interested groups throughout the state. And, we are dedicated to making sure this outreach effort increases awareness about the seriousness of diabetes in New Mexico and motivates people to take charge of their own health."

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“We commend KRWG for their commitment to increasing community involvement and for helping to forward the dialogue around health care quality improvement,” said Jennifer Trotter, NMMRA communications manager and lead contact for activities involving the PBS series in New Mexico.

NMMRA is funded by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to create a unique and relevant way to tie the national PBS series to efforts in New Mexico that address the state’s unique health-related challenges, especially for Medicare beneficiaries. A statewide coalition has been established to focus on bringing together and strengthening relationships among various health care stakeholders involved in quality improvement efforts while working with local PBS stations to promote the series, produce local programming, develop a resource guide of quality improvement efforts and post a local Web site (www.nmmra.org/nmcoalition.php). Efforts are highlighting health care quality improvement Champions of Change and activities in hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, physician offices, within communities, and among patients with chronic diseases like diabetes.

In addition to NMMRA’s work on a local level, a national public outreach campaign is underway in partnership with other states to help spread the word about the work being done to improve health care, and to generate the widest possible audience for the public television series. To date, over 35 national organizations have signed on as National Partners, including health care providers, purchasers, consumers and patient advocates, health care experts and government and regulatory groups. These organizations are alerting their members and encouraging them to participate in community-based activities designed to draw public attention to improving the quality of health care.

CMS has approved the involvement of Medicare’s QIOs in *Remaking American Medicine* and the outreach campaign as part of the program’s effort to promote quality improvement. Information about the PBS series and the national campaign are available at www.RAMcampaign.org. To learn more about your local coalition and quality improvement efforts, contact Jennifer Trotter, NMMRA communications manager, at 800-663-6351 or by e-mail at jtrotter@nmqio.sdps.org.

NMMRA is New Mexico’s not-for-profit, physician-sponsored and federally contracted Medicare QIO. The organization works with physicians, hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, other health care providers and Medicare beneficiaries to improve the quality of health care in New Mexico.

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