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**HUNTERDON CARDIOVASCULAR ASSOCIATES EARNS
NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR QUALITY CARE**

WASHINGTON, DC—The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) today announced that Hunterdon Cardiovascular Associates has received NCQA Recognition as a Patient-Centered Specialty Practice (PCSP) for its responsiveness to patients and medical colleagues, cooperation and integration with other health care groups, and dedication to continuous improvement.

Earning NCQA Recognition shows that Hunterdon Cardiovascular Associates has undergone a rigorous review of its capabilities and is committed to communication, coordination and providing access to care. Recognition signals to primary care practices that Hunterdon Cardiovascular Associates is ready to be an effective partner in caring for patients they have in common.

"NCQA Patient-Centered Specialty Practice Recognition distinguishes practices that communicate, collaborate and integrate care in ways that patients want and that improve quality," said NCQA President Margaret E. O'Kane. "I commend the team at Hunterdon Cardiovascular Associates for its achievement, and for its commitment to continuous improvement."

Hunterdon Cardiovascular Associates met or exceeded national standards for:

- Communicating with primary care clinicians to exchange key information and establish coordinated care plans.
- Providing timely access to care and clinical advice based on patient need.
- Using a systematic approach to track referrals and coordinate care.
- Measuring and improving performance over time.

PCSP recognition is modeled on and complements NCQA's Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Recognition program, the most widely adopted medical home model in the country. A medical home is a way of organizing primary care that uses teamwork and technology to improve quality, improve patients' experience of care and reduce costs. PCSP recognition highlights the "neighbors" in medical specialties that surround and inform the medical home and colleagues in primary care.

For further information, e-mail pcsp@ncqa.org.

ABOUT NCQA

NCQA is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to improving health care quality. NCQA accredits and certifies a wide range of health care organizations. It also recognizes clinicians and practices in key areas of performance. NCQA's Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) is the most widely used performance measurement tool in health care. NCQA's Web site (ncqa.org) contains information to help consumers, employers and others make more informed health care choices.

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Hunterdon Cardiovascular Associate's has been awarded by the National Committee for Quality Assurance Patient Centered Specialty Practice Level III Recognition for all three of their practices.

The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) announced that Hunterdon Cardiovascular Associates (HCA) received the highest level of recognition and are certified as Level III - Patient Centered Specialty Practice™. HCA was acknowledged for using evidence-based, patient-centered processes that focus on highly coordinated care and building better relationships between the patient, the primary care physician and the specialty practice.

Practices that become recognized under Patient-Centered Specialty Practice Recognition have demonstrated commitment to patient-centered care and clinical quality through: streamlined referral processes and care coordination with referring clinicians, timely patient and caregiver-focused care management and continuous clinical quality improvement.

HCA met key components in the following areas: written standards for patient access and enhanced communications, appropriate use of charting tools to track patients and



organize clinical information, responsive care management techniques, use of information technology for prescriptions and care management, use of evidenced based guidelines to treat chronic conditions, systematic tracking of referrals and test results and measurement and reporting of clinical and service performance.

A Patient Centered Specialty Practice is not a building or a place. Instead it is a concept of care delivery that puts the focus where it belongs: **on the patient**. The physician leads a team that includes the patient and various professionals at the specialty practice, all focused on improving and maintaining the health of the patient. Communication is strengthened and streamlined. Importantly, patients are supported in self-management. This results in enhanced quality of care, health outcomes and better disease control.

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Earning NCQA Patient-Centered Specialty Practice Recognition shows patients, private payers and government agencies that the practice has undergone a rigorous review of its capabilities and is committed to sharing information and coordinating care. Recognition also signals to primary care practices that the specialty practice is ready to be an effective partner in caring for patients.