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Community Health Center, Inc. Launches Coaching Program Aimed at Improving the Quality of Healthcare

MIDDLETOWN, Conn; June 28, 2013: Community Health Center, Inc. (CHC), based in Middletown, Connecticut, announces the launch of a new telehealth program to assist health centers in improving the quality of healthcare. This unique program, called **Project ECHO Coaching International**, is the first of its kind, joining experts in quality improvement from the United States and Sheffield, England.

Quality improvement coaches are healthcare professionals who have received specialized training in tools and techniques to improve the way healthcare is delivered; from scheduling and coordinating care, to patient flow, to managing test results and helping patients with their care. Coaches are increasingly being used by health systems to help them adapt to the many important changes that are happening in healthcare. They can be found in many different healthcare settings. **Project ECHO Coaching International** allows these coaches to join via videoconferencing with a team of expert faculty from CHC and England. Coaches will present challenging problems they are facing in their own practices to the expert team who will offer advice and recommendations. Working together, participants and faculty will help each other learn and gain new skills that can be used to make the healthcare system more patient centered, more effective, and more efficient.

The CHC faculty will be led by Deb Ward RN, Senior Quality Improvement Manager. She will be joined by Dr. Daren Anderson, VP, Chief Quality Officer, as well as Agi Erickson, and Patti Feeney, Quality Improvement Specialists. Additional faculty will include Ann Marie Hess APRN, Quality Improvement Specialist from Maine, and Steve Harrison, Service Improvement Manager from the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals in Sheffield, England. CHC will host the monthly videoconferences using a new teleconferencing system that will allow participants to join from almost anywhere using laptop computers, iPads, or even smartphones. "This format will bring together experts in quality improvement and measurement to provide solutions to complex issues faced by coaches as they work with front line teams," says Ms. Ward. "Coaches will prepare case presentations describing their team's work and difficult challenges they are facing. The faculty will review the cases in advance of the session and will assist the coach by offering expert advice."

Sheffield and CHC share a common goal of using state of the art quality improvement methods to improve healthcare for their patients. CHC hosted the staff from Sheffield last fall for a symposium on healthcare quality. "We realized immediately that there was great opportunity for collaboration and set out to make these sessions a reality," said Dr. Anderson. Going forward, CHC will be offering these sessions to centers across the US and internationally, building a unique learning community dedicated to improving healthcare for all.

About Community Health Center, Inc.

Since 1972, Community Health Center, Inc. has been one of the leading healthcare providers in the state of Connecticut, building a world-class primary health care system committed to caring for uninsured and underserved populations. CHC is focused on improving health outcomes for its more than 130,000 patients as well as building healthy communities. Recognized as both a Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home by the National Committee for Quality Assurance and a Primary Care Medical Home by The Joint Commission, CHC delivers service in more than 200 locations statewide, offering primary care in medical, dental and behavioral health services. For more information, visit www.chc1.com.

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