

For Immediate Release

February 3, 2011

The Medica Research Institute Announces its First Research Projects

Minneapolis – The Medica Research Institute today announced its first three research projects. The projects will be conducted in collaboration with senior investigators from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health.

The three initial projects and the corresponding investigators are:

The Effect of Incentive Payment on the Uptake of Well Child visits led by John Nyman Ph.D. Dr. Nyman and colleagues will study a population comprised of Minnesota Health Care Programs members to assess the effect of an incentive program for increasing preventive "well child" visits. The research hypothesis is that the incentive will increase the likelihood of children receiving preventive care.

Using a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Approach to Study the Relationship between Primary Care Access and Patterns of Healthcare Utilization for Children with Asthma led by Sandra Potthoff Ph.D. Researchers will study the pediatric asthma population to identify how patterns of emergency department utilization are related to access and environmental factors.

The Determinants of Computed Tomography (CT) Scan Over Utilization led by William Riley Ph.D. This project will study CT usage with individuals that receive a high volume of scans per year. These researchers will seek to determine what processes can be developed for understanding CT scan overutilization and creating guidelines to improve quality and avoid potential harm.

"The School of Public Health is delighted to be partnering with the Medica Research Institute on these projects designed to answer important questions about health care access, utilization and cost," said John R. Finnegan, Jr., Ph.D., dean of the School of Public Health. "The Medica Research Institute is one of many valued community partners with whom we collaborate for the purpose of improving the health of members of our community."

In order to set research priorities, a call went out to Medica leadership and front line staff to identify issues or barriers reported by its members and providers that impact quality healthcare experiences. Out of 19 proposals received by the Medica Research Institute, three were selected as research projects that will be funded by the Institute. These pilot projects will explore evidence and provide initial recommendations. Intramural awards projects are required to be eligible for extramural funding for subsequent research. The Medica Research Institute is conducting this research in support of its mission to protect health and improve lives.

About the Medica Research Institute

The Medica Research Institute is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) foundation and a sister organization to Medica Health Plans, a Minnesota-based nonprofit HMO. The Research Institute was established in January 2010. Its mission is to conduct research that generates information for timely translation into activities which protect health and improve lives. For more information about the Medica Research Institute and its activities visit: www.MedicaResearchInstitute.org.

About Medica

Medica is a health care services company headquartered in Minneapolis and active in the Upper Midwest. With nearly 1.6 million members, the non-profit company provides health care coverage in the employer, individual, Medicaid, Medicare and Medicare Part D markets in Minnesota and a growing number of counties in North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. Medica also offers national network coverage to employers who also have employees outside the Medica regional network.

Medica has the highest accreditation status, Excellent, from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA®) for its Minnesota Medicaid HMO plans and commercial health plans in Minnesota and North Dakota. Medica's vision is to become the community's health plan of choice, trusted for its integrity, respected for its service, and admired for its commitment to innovation and efficiency.

###

For more information contact:

Greg Bury

952-992-8437

greg.bury@medica.com