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**For Immediate Release**

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**New Report from Long Term Quality Alliance**

**Highlights Best Practices for Care Transitions and Avoiding Unnecessary Hospitalizations**

Washington, D.C. – The Long Term Quality Alliance (LTQA) today released a summary of its Innovative Communities Summit held in Washington D.C. in late 2010. The report, “*Innovative Communities: Breaking Down Barriers for the Good of Older Consumers and Their Family Caregivers,*” features case studies of how three communities in the United States are working together to improve care transitions and reduce avoidable hospitalizations. The report lays out steps the LTQA should take to encourage and promote creation of comparable multi-sector innovative communities that would involve local providers as well as consumers and caregivers.

The summit, held at Georgetown University on December 10 and made possible by a grant from The SCAN Foundation, drew more than 150 people from around the United States representing a variety of organizations working to improve care transitions for people needing long-term services and supports. Community delegations of three-to-five people were invited to attend the summit to explore the possibility of participating in a multi-year project to give innovative communities the support and assistance they need to create and strengthen multi-sector cooperatives for improving transitions and reducing hospitalization rates.

The meeting participants included leaders from federal and state government, advocacy and service organizations serving older consumers, individuals with disabilities and their caregivers, national, state and local professional associations, aging networks, hospitals and health systems, and organizations that provide acute care, long-term services and supports, housing and home and community based services.

“While action on the national level is certainly integral to health care reform, LTQA is convinced that the real and sustainable health reform victories will take place at the local level, in cities and towns across the country,” says LTQA Chair Mary Naylor, Ph.D., FAAN, R.N. Naylor says that health reform is doomed to fail “unless all of these local stakeholders pool their collective energy, break down the silos in which they operate, and work together to devise and implement strategies and interventions that advance and improve care.”

The report showcases how three innovative programs are working to reduce re-hospitalization rates and improve care transitions: North Carolina’s *Community Connections* project in Chapel Hill; Vermont’s *Seniors Aging Safely at Home* in Burlington; and Michigan’s *Detroit Community Action to Redu*ce *Hospitalizations in* Farmington.

“These programs serve as examples for strengthening the continuum of care, including ways to prevent unnecessary hospitalization and improved transitions between medical and social settings, with the goal of creating a more person-centered, efficient system that empowers aging with dignity in the place of the consumer’s choice,” said Bruce Chernof, MD, president and CEO of The SCAN Foundation.

It also highlights what participants envision for a more collaborative future for those who provide care and services to older people. The ideal health system of tomorrow fosters consumer empowerment, promotes team-based approaches to care, encourages a philosophy of equal partnership, features a leader who can build bridges among partners and is deeply committed to the good of the community, and sets up a system that fosters cross-collaborations and flexible funding streams.

For copies of the report of this important summit: “*Innovative Communities: Breaking Down Barriers for the Good of Older Consumers and Their Family Caregivers,”* visit the LTQA website [www.ltqa.org](http://www.ltqa.org)

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*The LTQA is supported by a grant from The SCAN Foundation, which is dedicated to creating a society in which seniors receive medical treatment and human services that are integrated in the setting most appropriate to their needs. For more information, please visit* [*www.TheSCANFoundation.org*](http://www.TheSCANFoundation.org)