

**Contact:** Karla Hurter  
Phone: (703)319-0957  
[khurter@health2resources.com](mailto:khurter@health2resources.com)



## **URAC names finalists in first-ever Best Practices in Consumer Empowerment and Protection Awards**

*Finalists to showcase their winning programs in educational setting at Best Practices Conference and Exhibit March 25-26, 2008*

**Washington, D.C. Nov. 29 2007** – Today URAC announced that a distinguished panel of judges has selected the finalists for its inaugural Best Practices in Consumer Empowerment and Protection Awards competition. The nation-wide competition attracted entries detailing innovative and proven programs that are enhancing patient safety and giving consumers more control over their health care. Winners represent health plans, pharmacy benefit management organizations, health care management companies and health information technology companies.

The finalists are invited to present their winning programs at the Best Practices in Consumer Empowerment and Protection Conference and Exhibit, to be held March 25-26, 2008 at the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel in Orlando. Presentations will showcase working best practices in three categories: consumer decision support, integrated care coordination and patient/consumer safety.

“The Best Practices awards and conference will be an opportunity for leaders in health care management to find out what premier companies are really doing to advance consumer protection and empowerment,” said Alan Spielman, URAC’s president and CEO. “This is a first-of-its-kind conference with national scope that includes entries from health care management organizations big and small, across the health care spectrum.”

Entries were judged by a distinguished panel of judges, chaired by epidemiologist Thomas W. Wilson, Ph.D., DrPH, Trajectory HealthCare, LLC. The panel included the best and most widely recognized experts in program evaluation, care coordination, health information technology, employer and purchaser decision making and patient safety. Entries were blinded, then reviewed and scored by the judges based on objective criteria.

All finalists are invited to attend a black tie dinner gala during the conference, at which time they will discover how they will be distinguished as award winners. Gold, Silver and Bronze Best Practices Award winners in each of the four organization categories will be announced at the dinner, as well as winners in the three topic categories, and those receiving Honorable Mention.

URAC also announced today that Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc., one of the world’s leading pharmaceutical companies, will be the Founder Sponsor for the Health Care Management Award and educational track.

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"There is tremendous value in recognizing outstanding health care management programs that advance consumer empowerment and protection," Spielman said. "This conference will prepare attendees to apply these best practices to their own programs. It is a groundbreaking mechanism to multiply the positive outcomes of winning programs across the health management field and to raise the bar on quality for both URAC-accredited and non-accredited organizations."

Conference highlights include keynote addresses from two nationally renowned speakers. Award-winning journalist, best-selling author and television producer Linda Ellerbee will present "Empowering the Health Care Consumer: A Patient's Experience," speaking from her own history as a breast cancer survivor. After an illustrious television news career at both CBS and NBC, she and her partner began their own production company. Lucky Duck Productions first produced documentaries for PBS, but is now best known for its children's news program, *Nick News* for Nickelodeon. *Nick News* is watched by more children than all other television news shows combined. She is author of two books, *And so it goes* and her latest, *Take Big Bites: Adventures Around the World and Across the Table*.

A second keynote speaker is Michael F. Roizen, MD., co-founder and chairman of RealAge, Inc. whose topic is "The Smart Patient: A Provider's Perspective on Consumer Empowerment." Roizen created RealAge, Inc., a consumer-health media company and provider of personalized health information and management tools that motivate health-conscious people to look, feel, and "live life to the youngest." He is author of four New York Times Best Seller books, most recently *You: The Smart Patient*, co-authored with Dr. Mehmet Oz. RealAge has been featured on national radio and television programs including *20/20*, *Good Morning America*, *The Today Show*, and *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. Roizen is considered one of the nation's top physicians and is chair of the Division of Anesthesiology, Critical Care Medicine, and Comprehensive Pain Management at the Cleveland Clinic.

Finalists in the Best Practices in Consumer Empowerment and Protection Awards competition are:

ActiveHealth Management, *Helping Consumers Close Gaps in Their Health Care*

Aetna, Inc., *Aetna's Health Care Transparency Initiative*

American Specialty Health, *Reduction in Regional Variation of X-ray Utilization*

BlueCross BlueShield of Kansas City, *Adolescent Immunization Community Collaborative*

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas, *BCC: Closing the Gaps in the Obesity Epidemic*

Definity Health, *OptumHealth Treatment Decision Support Program*

Department of Veterans Affairs, *My HealtheVet*

Eli Lilly and Company, *Behavioral Pharmacy Management Program*

Express Scripts, *Express Scripts Generics Today*

FONEMED, *Exposure Hotline of Centra Care and FONEMED*

INSPIRIS, *INSPIRIS CarePlus Nurse Practitioner-Led Care*

Martin's Point Health Care, *Post Hospital Discharge Call Process*

Medco Health Solutions, Inc., *Improving Patient Safety for Diabetic Patients*

MemberHealth, LLC, *Improving ACE-I Utilization in Medicare Part D*

Molina Healthcare of Washington, *The Washington Medicaid Integration Partnership*

Paradigm Health, *Care Management Impact on Advance Directive Completion*

Prescription Solutions, *Geriatric RxMonitor Program*

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PsycHealth, Ltd., *BH Home Intervention Impact on Readmissions*  
Sensei, Inc., *Sensei for Weight Loss*

For more details including the list of judges and to register for the Best Practices in Consumer Empowerment and Protection Conference and Exhibit, go to <http://www.urac.org/bestpractices>

### **About URAC**

URAC, an independent, nonprofit organization, is well-known as a leader in promoting health care quality through its accreditation and certification programs. URAC offers a wide range of quality benchmarking programs and services that keep pace with the rapid changes in the health care system, and provide a symbol of excellence for organizations to validate their commitment to quality and accountability. Through its broad-based governance structure and an inclusive standards development process, URAC ensures that all stakeholders are represented in establishing meaningful quality measures for the entire health care industry. For more information, visit [www.urac.org](http://www.urac.org).

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