

THE NATIONAL QUALITY FORUM

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Two Renowned Healthcare Quality Leaders Join NQF Board of Directors

Washington, DC – The National Quality Forum (NQF) today announced that Jeffrey L. Kang, MD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer of CIGNA HealthCare, and Peter V. Lee, JD, Chief Executive Officer of the Pacific Business Group on Health, have been named to NQF's Board of Directors.

In announcing Kang and Lee, the Chairman of the NQF Board, William L. Roper, MD, MPH, said, "I am pleased that two such highly qualified individuals will bring their substantial expertise and unique perspectives to NQF's Board. Jeff is a recognized national leader in healthcare quality in both the public and private sectors, and Peter has long been a champion of employers' critical role in improving quality and promoting value in healthcare. Both bring their energy and their passion to NQF and to the national healthcare quality improvement effort."

Dr. Kang, a former federal health official representing an organization whose medical plans cover nearly 10 million Americans, brings the perspective of the healthcare payer community. Lee, a frequent speaker and expert commentator on national healthcare quality issues, brings to the Board the perspective of the healthcare purchaser/employer community.

Kang is responsible for medical strategy and policy at CIGNA HealthCare, including evidence-based coverage decisions and quality measurement and improvement. He is responsible for CIGNA's initiatives to track healthcare quality through the National Committee for Quality Assurance's (NCQA's) HEDIS measures. From 1995 to 2002, Kang worked at the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS, previously the Health Care Financing Administration) in a variety of capacities, most recently as Chief Clinical Officer. In his career at CMS, Kang spearheaded the national quality improvement program through Medicare's Quality Improvement Organizations. Kang served on the Quality Forum Planning Committee, which was convened in 1998 by Vice President Al Gore to propose a basic governance and operating structure for NQF. Also during his tenure at CMS, Kang represented the agency on NQF's Board when the Administrator (who holds a permanent seat on the Board) was not available.

Currently Kang co-chairs NQF's Steering Committee on Standardizing Ambulatory Care Performance Measures. He also serves on the Institute of Medicine's Subcommittee on Quality Improvement Organization Evaluation and is a board member of the eHealth Initiative.

"Healthcare payers have a great deal at stake as NQF continues to add measures to its roster of voluntary consensus standards," Kang said. "I am honored to take a seat at the table to ensure that the measures NQF endorses continue to move quality and safety forward."

As the chief executive of the Pacific Business Group on Health (PBGH), headquartered in San Francisco, CA, Lee oversees the organization's efforts to continuously improve the value equation by increasing access to high quality healthcare while controlling costs. PBGH is a not-for-profit coalition of more than 50 large private- and public-sector healthcare purchasers, which collectively spend billions of dollars annually to provide healthcare coverage to more than 3 million employees, dependents, and retirees. PBGH promotes providing consumers with standardized comparative quality information and developing methods to assess and communicate the quality of care delivered by health plans, medical groups, and hospitals. Under his leadership, PBGH has been a proponent of implementing NQF-endorsed™ voluntary consensus standards, and PBGH has demonstrated its commitment to NQF by having numerous staff participate in Steering Committees and Technical Advisory Panels.

Lee is a member of the boards of NCQA, the National Business Coalition on Health, and CalRHIO, and he is co-chair of the Consumer/Purchaser Disclosure Project. Prior to joining PBGH, he was Executive Director of the Center for Health Care Rights, a healthcare consumer advocacy organization based in Los Angeles, CA.

"NQF is one of the few organizations that has consistently recognized that the perspectives of consumers and purchasers, along with providers, must be central to framing what is measured. Beyond recognizing that the consumer and patient needs to the 'true north' for measurement efforts, NQF ensured that the perspectives of the healthcare consumers and purchasers are heard, understood, and reflected in measure selection," Lee said. "I look forward to helping lead NQF as it develops and implements a national strategy for healthcare performance measurement and reporting."

NQF is a voluntary consensus standard-setting organization. It is a private, not-for-profit, public benefit corporation established in 1999 to standardize healthcare quality measurement and reporting. Established as a unique public-private partnership, NQF has broad participation from all sectors of the healthcare industry. Visit NQF on the web at www.qualityforum.org.