

**Current Context of the Accountability Project:
Betsy Lehman Center has Addressed Patient Safety Goal for the Health Care Quality and Cost Council**

After the Betsy Lehman Center for Patient Safety and Medical Error Reduction contracted with the Massachusetts Coalition for the Prevention of Medical Errors to organize a consensus process among the stakeholders to address accountability and improvement through the reporting and analysis of serious adverse events, the Massachusetts health reform law (Chapter 58 of the Acts of 2006) created the Health Care Quality and Cost Council.

The Council's mission is to develop and coordinate the implementation of health care quality improvement goals that are intended to lower or contain the growth in health care costs while improving the quality of care, including reductions in racial and ethnic health disparities. The Council's vision is that Massachusetts will consistently rank in national measures as the state achieving the highest levels of performance in care that is safe, effective, patient centered, timely, efficient, equitable, integrated, and affordable by June 30, 2012.

Among the goals the Council has set for FY 2008, it defined a specific goal related to this Accountability Project, the goal to ensure patient safety and effectiveness of care. This goal reads: "Eliminate "Never Events" as defined by the National Quality Forum. Eliminate events that should never happen in hospitals, such as wrong surgery, wrong site, or wrong patient."

The specific recommendations of the Accountability Project, if implemented, would support the advancement of this goal of the Health Care Quality and Cost Council in Massachusetts. The recommendations would support public accountability for serious reportable events in healthcare, the insightful analysis of these events by hospitals and state agencies to ensure effective corrective action plans, and dramatic expansion of the shared learning of these improvement lessons among health care organizations.

The Betsy Lehman Center, in sponsoring this work, has already made substantial progress in achieving a multi-stakeholder agreement on approaches that will address this goal of eliminating serious reportable events to improve patient safety in the Commonwealth. The Massachusetts Coalition for the Prevention of Medical Errors offers our continued support and assistance in any efforts to implement these recommendations and achieve this important goal.