



January 22, 2010

Vahe A. Kazandjian, Ph.D
Senior Vice President
Maryland Hospital Association
6820 Deerpath Rd
Elkridge MD 21075

Dear Dr. Kazandjian:

On behalf of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and the High 5s Project collaboration, we would like to welcome the Maryland Hospital Association and its subsidiary, the Center For Performance Sciences (CPS), as a key partner in implementing the High 5s Project, Medication Reconciliation Standard Operating Protocol (SOP), in the United States. Considering the lead role that the Maryland Hospital Association has played in improving the safety of medication use practices in Maryland hospitals, we regard the involvement of MHA and its subsidiary CPS as an important contribution to the attainment of the goals of the High 5s Project at a national level.

The High 5s Project was launched by WHO in 2006 to address major concerns about patient safety around the world. The High 5s name derives from the project's original intent to reduce significantly the frequency of five patient safety problems, in five countries, over five years. The Project is an international collaboration among nine countries and the WHO Collaborating Centre for Patient Safety (led by the Joint Commission and Joint Commission International) in support of the work of the WHO Patient Safety Programme.

Each Country participating in the High 5s Project has designated a Lead Technical Agency (LTA) to oversee implementation of the Project. In the U.S., the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is the lead technical agency (LTA). Because AHRQ, unlike the other nations' lead technical agencies, does not control any part of the health care delivery system, it is partnering with the Maryland Hospital Association and its subsidiary Center For Performance Sciences to help recruit participants, support activities, and generally conduct the medication reconciliation project, which addresses the prevention of medication errors resulting from incomplete or miscommunicated information at points of transition in the patient care process.

It is anticipated that through the promotion, adaptation, and uptake of standardized patient safety solutions, the High 5s will demonstrate that these protocols can be effectively implemented and can produce significant and sustainable reductions in patient safety problems. The project will further disseminate valuable lessons and new knowledge to support the advancement of patient safety around the world.

AHRQ looks forward to working closely with the Maryland Hospital Association to pursue this important patient safety concern.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William B. Munier".

William B. Munier, MD
Director, Center for Quality Improvement and Patient Safety

cc: Carmela Coyle
President & CEO
MHA