



news release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wellmark Health Plan of Iowa named 'excellent' for ninth consecutive year

DES MOINES, IA (October 29, 2009) – Wellmark Health Plan of Iowa, Inc. has been awarded *Excellent* accreditation status – *for the ninth consecutive year* – from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

Excellent status, the highest level possible, is based on a voluntary review of how well plans meet NCQA's consumer protection and quality improvement requirements. Plans must also achieve HEDIS® (Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set) results in the highest range of national or regional performance.

"Achieving 'Excellent' status for the ninth year in a row speaks volumes to the quality of care that is delivered by our network of hospitals and physicians to the 250,000 Iowans that we cover," said Tim Weber, president, Wellmark Health Plan of Iowa. "We designed our health plan to be a collaborative effort with the providers in the state. This recognition reflects the positive results of that collaboration.

The NCQA report also includes a Health Plan Report Card, which rates plans in a range of categories representing the full spectrum of services and clinical care. Wellmark Health Plan of Iowa received four stars – the highest rating – in four of five categories:

- *Access and Service*, how well the plan provides members with access to needed care and good customer service.
- *Qualified Providers*, ensuring that each network physician is licensed and trained to practice medicine, and members are happy with their physicians.
- *Staying Healthy*, how well the plan helps members maintain good health and avoid illness.
- *Living with Illness*, how well the plan helps members manage chronic illnesses.

The plan received three stars in the category of *Getting Better*, which evaluates health plan activities to help members recover from illness. Wellmark Health Plan of Iowa providers and members can view the plan's NCQA Health Plan Report Card at www.ncqa.org.

Visit www.wellmark.com for more information on Wellmark's health products and services.

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NCQA is an independent not-for-profit organization dedicated to measuring the quality of America's health care. HEDIS®, a registered trademark of NCQA, is used by more than 90 percent of American health plans to measure performance on areas of care and service.