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AMERICAN COLLEGE OF CARDIOLOGY LAUNCHES QUALITY FIRST CAMPAIGN TO SET NEW STANDARDS FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM

Survey Results Show Americans Concerned about Quality, Cost; Demand Doctor Involvement

WASHINGTON D.C. – September 16, 2008 – The American College of Cardiology (ACC) today kicked off its Quality First campaign which advocates for new standards for quality in health care reform, while setting forth initiatives that will immediately begin to move the American health care system dramatically forward.

At the launch of the Quality First campaign, the ACC released findings from a recent survey revealing the American public's dissatisfaction with the current health care system and the need for doctors, especially cardiologists, to be involved in the reform movement. The results showed that not only do 52 percent of Americans feel that the costs of health care are too high, but 77 percent are also unhappy with the way the health care system is being regulated.

"The results of the survey could not be clearer. Americans want health care reform now," said ACC CEO Jack Lewin, M.D. "The goal of the Quality First campaign is to advocate for the highest quality of care at the most effective cost. We are committed to working with payers, Congress and other organizations on pilot programs, legislation, strengthened quality measures, guidelines and appropriate use of technology."

Eighty-six percent of survey participants said that they would most trust doctors and medical or patient advocacy groups to set standards for measuring and reporting health care quality. Through the Quality First campaign, the ACC is committed to supporting efforts to increase transparency, focus on measureable outcomes and provide accountability in care, as well as advocate for the development and implementation of health information technology to increase the quality of care and help control costs.

According to the survey, 83 percent of Americans agree that the primary objectives of the ACC are extremely or very important and 64 percent said that the ACC's top priorities should be setting new standards for health care reform and advocating for sound health care priorities.

"Considering that heart disease is the leading killer in the United States and that more than 40 percent of Medicare spending goes towards cardiovascular-related medicine, cardiologists and the ACC are in a key position to refocus the health care debate and work with Congress and our partners on creating a new vision for health care," said ACC President W. Douglas Weaver, M.D. "Americans want their cardiologists involved in this vitally important process and through the Quality First campaign, the ACC is committing itself to ensuring that Americans get the health care they need and deserve."

The survey, conducted by Luntz, Maslansky Strategic Research, polled a nationally representative sample of 1,003 American likely voters with a margin of error of 3.1 percent. Forty-two percent of those polled said they would likely vote for Barack Obama and 40 percent said they would likely vote for John McCain (with 15 percent undecided) if the election were held at the time of the poll.

Survey results are available by contacting either Amy Murphy or Larry Farnsworth.

About the American College of Cardiology

The American College of Cardiology is leading the way to optimal cardiovascular care and disease prevention. The College is a 36,000-member nonprofit medical society and bestows the credential Fellow of the American College of Cardiology upon physicians who meet its stringent qualifications. The College is a leader in the formulation of health policy, standards and guidelines, and is a staunch supporter of cardiovascular research. The ACC provides professional education and operates national registries for the measurement and improvement of quality care. More information about the association is available online at www.acc.org.

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