



## For Immediate Release

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### JCR and Hill-Rom Name Nurse Safety Scholar-in-Residence

*Diane Whitworth of Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital to lead efforts to develop tools and insights into the prevention of pressure ulcers*

**(OAK BROOK, Ill. and BATESVILLE, Ind. – May 17, 2010)** Diane Whitworth has been named the Nurse Safety Scholar-in-Residence by Joint Commission Resources (JCR) and Hill-Rom (NYSE:HRC). JCR is a not-for-profit affiliate of The Joint Commission. Hill-Rom is a global medical technology company.

Whitworth is a certified wound, ostomy and continence nurse (CWOCN) with more than 30 years of clinical experience. She is currently responsible for the wound care team at Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital, a 391-bed acute care hospital and magnet designated facility in Richmond, Va.

Recognizing the important role that nurses play in translating evidence-based findings into excellent care at the patient's bedside, the Nurse Safety Scholar-in-Residence program, in its second year of a three-year project, focuses on developing tools and best practices to maintain skin integrity and to prevent pressure ulcers. An estimated 2.5 million patients are treated annually for pressure ulcers in acute care facilities in the United States, according to studies published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 2003 and 2006. A December 2008 report by the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project (HCUP) states that in 2006 there were 503,000 hospital stays with pressure ulcers noted as a diagnosis, nearly an 80 percent increase since 1993. Lengths of stay, discharges to long term care settings, average patient age, and mortality were all higher in patients with pressure ulcers than in those without. Pressure ulcers are among the preventable conditions and events on Medicare's "no pay" list.

“Diane’s leadership experience as a clinician and educator will be an asset as we continue the Nurse Safety Scholar-in-Residence project and pursue continued development and dissemination of innovative solutions to prevent pressure ulcers,” said Nanne Finis, RN, M.S., executive director, Solutions Services, JCR.

“We are fortunate to have Diane as our scholar. Her passion for patient care, her commitment to pressure ulcer prevention and her desire to transform health care delivery will have a long lasting impact,” noted Melissa Fitzpatrick, RN, M.S.N., FAAN, Hill-Rom’s Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer. “We are excited to see this program move into its second year and are proud to be a part of it. At Hill-Rom, we strive to use our resources in ways that make a difference every day in the lives of patients and their caregivers and this type of program is a perfect fit for us.”

Whitworth, the second nurse to be named in this program, will serve a six-month appointment as Patient Safety Nurse Scholar-in-Residence. During her term, which ends September 30, 2010, she will work closely with JCR and Hill-Rom experts to achieve the goals of the program:

- To foster the professional development of expert nurse clinicians and scholars to become translators of evidence into practice;
- To disseminate best practice processes associated with providing safe care for specific clinical problems; and
- To continue the work of a hospital-based collaborative project focused on the implementation of pressure ulcer reduction strategies.

Nurse practitioner Irene M. Jankowski, A.P.R.N., M.S.N, C.W.O.C.N., of Beth Israel Medical Center, New York, N.Y., was the first Nurse Safety Scholar-in-Residence. Jankowski’s blog is available on the program’s Web site. The program is being led by Roberta Fruth, RN, M.S., Ph.D., senior consultant, Joint Commission Resources. Fruth has more than 30 years of experience in health care operations and education in hospital, ambulatory and international settings. Previously, she served as chief nurse executive and vice president of patient services at St. Joseph Hospital, Chicago, Ill.

For more information about the program, please visit <http://www.jcrinc.com/JCR-Hill-Rom-Nurse-Scholar/>. The site will be updated regularly as Whitworth chronicles her work throughout this phase of the project. The search for a third and final Nurse Safety Scholar-in-Residence begins in July with the term beginning in October 2010. Look for the application on the JCR Web site in late July.

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### **About Joint Commission Resources (JCR)**

Joint Commission Resources (JCR), a not-for-profit affiliate of The Joint Commission, is the official publisher and educator of The Joint Commission. JCR is an expert resource for health care organizations, providing consulting services, educational services and publications to assist in improving quality and safety and to help in meeting the accreditation standards of The Joint Commission. JCR provides consulting services independently from The Joint Commission and in a fully confidential manner. Please visit our web site at [www.jcrinc.com](http://www.jcrinc.com).

### **About Hill-Rom**

**Hill-Rom** is a leading worldwide manufacturer and provider of medical technologies and related services for the health care industry, including patient support systems, safe mobility and handling solutions, non-invasive therapeutic products for a variety of acute and chronic medical conditions, medical equipment rentals, and information technology solutions. Hill-Rom's comprehensive product and service offerings are used by health care providers across the health care continuum in hospitals, xtended care facilities and home care settings to enhance the safety and quality of patient care.

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