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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Program to Combat Depression in College Students Wins Innovations in Quality Improvement Award***Awards Presented by the AAAHC Institute for Quality Improvement***

Skokie, Ill. [Sept. 9, 2009] — A national initiative to identify and treat college students who suffer from depression is one of two winners of the 2009 Innovations in Quality Improvement Awards from the AAAHC Institute for Quality Improvement (AAAHC Institute), a not-for-profit subsidiary of the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC/Accreditation Association).

The winners will present their studies and receive their awards at the AAAHC Institute's Annual National Educational Forum for Ambulatory Health Care, Dec. 5 – 6, in Las Vegas. For more information or to register, visit www.aaahciqi.org and click on "National Educational Forum."

Depression in College Students

"Unrecognized and untreated depression is currently the most common serious public health problem in college students," said Henry Chung, M.D., associate vice president of student health, New York University, who first developed the program and will accept the award on behalf of the National College Depression Partnership (NCDP). NYU piloted and is the national coordinating center for the program.

According to a survey conducted by the American College Health Association, the number of college students who reported receiving a diagnosis of clinical depression increased from 10 percent in 2000 to 16 percent in 2005. In 2008, 11 percent of students were diagnosed with depression, but the survey also found high rates of hopeless feelings (47 percent), feeling overwhelmed (87 percent), feeling overwhelming anxiety (49 percent), feeling so depressed that it was difficult to function (31 percent) and feeling overwhelming anger (39 percent).

In a population of nearly 18 million students, as many as 2.35 million may experience significant depression during their college years. “The impact of depression on college students is substantial. It negatively affects learning, success in school and student retention, yet most students go undiagnosed and untreated,” Chung said. A 2005 survey of college counseling directors found that only 17.5 percent of 154 students who committed suicide had been treated for depression, he said.

For the NCDP program, more than 80,000 students have been screened since June 2008, out of a total of 200,000 enrolled students at 20 participating schools.* Of students who were identified as clinically depressed, 91.8 percent began treatment within four weeks. At 12 weeks, nearly half (47.8 percent) reported improved functioning.

For more information, visit www.nyu.edu/ncdp.

The AAAHC Institute for Quality Improvement (AAAHC Institute) is among the few organizations to provide ambulatory care providers with the opportunities for benchmarking on a national level. The Accreditation Association established the AAAHC Institute in 1999 to provide ambulatory health care organizations opportunities to participate in quality improvement and performance measurement studies and educational programs. To date, the AAAHC Institute has conducted and published more than 50 performance measurement studies and has convened annual national educational forums on quality improvement in ambulatory health care. Involvement in clinical performance measurement is a signal to patients, government agencies, professional liability insurers, and third-party payers, that an ambulatory health organization is committed to continually improving the care it provides to its patients.

The Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC/Accreditation Association), founded in 1979, is celebrating its 30th anniversary as the leader in ambulatory health care accreditation, with more than 4,500 organizations accredited nationwide. The AAAHC accredits a variety of ambulatory health care organizations, including ambulatory surgery centers, office-based surgery centers, college student health centers, managed care organizations, military health care clinics, and large medical and dental practices. The Accreditation Association serves as an advocate for the provision of high-quality health care through the development of nationally recognized standards and through its survey and accreditation programs. AAAHC accreditation is recognized as a symbol of quality by third-party payers, medical organizations, liability insurance companies, state and federal agencies and the public.

***Schools participating in the NCDP partnership are:**

- Baruch College of the City University of New York
- Bowling Green State University, Ohio
- Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio
- Columbia University, New York City, N.Y.
- Evergreen State University, Olympia, Wash.
- Louisiana State University, Shreveport
- Michigan State University, East Lansing
- The New School, New York City
- New York University, New York City
- Pennsylvania State University, Altoona
- Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, N.Y.
- Saint Lawrence University, Canton, N.Y.
- Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, N.Y.
- School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Ill.
- Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.
- Texas Christian University, Fort Worth
- Tufts University, Medford, Mass.
- University of Arizona, Tucson
- University of California, Los Angeles

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