



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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## **RWJF SELECTS CINCINNATI PHYSICIAN ROBERT GRAHAM TO LEAD ALIGNING FORCES FOR QUALITY PROGRAM**

Princeton, N.J. – The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) announced today that Robert Graham, M.D., has been named national program director of *Aligning Forces for Quality* (AF4Q), the cornerstone of its multi-year, \$300 million commitment to improve the quality and equality of health care nationwide.

Graham will also hold an appointment as a research professor of Health Policy at George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services (GWU). GWU serves as the national program office of the Aligning Forces for Quality program.

Aligning Forces is RWJF's signature effort to increase the overall quality of health care in 17 targeted communities nationwide. Since 2006, teams of local health care providers, consumers and payers have worked together to systematically improve the quality of care delivered in their local health care markets. In each region, multi-stakeholder alliances have developed comprehensive reports that measure the performance of local primary care physicians and shared the information with the public. The reports are used to educate consumers and help physicians identify where care can be improved. Specific programs to help health care providers improve their care have been launched in doctors' offices and hospitals in all of the AF4Q regions. Special efforts are also underway in the communities to identify where racial and ethnic disparities in care may arise and address them.

"In every community in America there are big differences in the quality of care that patients receive, but Aligning Forces is showing that transformation can occur when local parties come together," said Anne F. Weiss, M.P.P., team director of RWJF's Quality/Equality program. "As a physician, a public servant, a national health care leader and a hands-on manager of community-based reform, Bob Graham has proven that he understands how to connect the right people in the right ways to dramatically improve the quality and value of health care. We are honored to have him lead a program of this significance and magnitude."

After receiving his medical degree from the University of Kansas, Graham began a distinguished career in health policy administration. He served as administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration in the U.S. Public Health Service, held senior positions with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and was CEO of the American Academy of Family Physicians. He is currently chair of the board of the Alliance for Health Reform and a member of the Institute of Medicine. He is also a faculty member at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine as a professor and endowed chair in the department of Family Medicine. Last year, he was appointed project director for Cincinnati's Aligning Forces for Quality effort, overseeing all aspects of the program in the Cincinnati tri-state area.

"The department of Health Policy could not be more fortunate in the appointment of Robert Graham to its faculty," said Sara Rosenbaum, J.D., chair of GWU's department of Health Policy. "His leadership of Aligning Forces for Quality will further enhance and strengthen the Foundation's wonderful program."



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RWJF officials have made a 10-year commitment to the Aligning Forces strategy, from 2006 through 2015. In the next phase of Aligning Forces, from May 2011 until May 2013, AF4Q community teams will continue to improve quality and equity in care and will increase their focus on improving the value of local health care. Local AF4Q alliances will lead efforts to compare costs that different local physicians charge for similar services and explore how payment to physicians could be linked to their ability to consistently provide quality care. Graham replaces Bruce Siegel, M.D., M.P.H., who left GWU and the leadership of AF4Q in 2010 to lead the National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems.

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