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Strategic Health Group’s Hank Osowski Challenges States, Providers and Health Plans to be Committed to Innovation as Healthcare Reform Unfolds

(LOS ANGELES – May 23, 2017) —Despite the uncertainty and distractions surrounding federal healthcare reform, Strategic Health Group Managing Partner Hank Osowski told a recent gathering of healthcare leaders that “states, providers and health plans must all be committed to innovation” in building effective care models that address the needs of the nation.

Osowski made his remarks before the Behavioral Health Integration Best Practices Summit held earlier this month in San Diego.

While citing the cost savings and care efficiencies inherent in effectively integrating medical and behavioral care into one smooth running model, Osowski said that sadly “often the components tend to work at cross purposes with misaligned incentives creating a system patients find difficult to navigate.” He said that this tension will be heightened as limited funds become available under proposed healthcare reform.

“Nobody knows for certain what the final version of the American Health Care Act will look like, but it is fair to say that beneficiaries, providers and plans will all be effected and battles will be fought at the state level over limited funds,” he said. “Provider and plan reimbursement rates will decline and revenue compression will create new network challenges. States will likely have greater flexibility in where dollars and resources are put, but we don’t know yet if that will ultimately be a good thing.”

Osowski believes that the answer will be found in innovation with individual states, providers and health plans all sharing equally in this responsibly. He cited Intermountain, Unity-Point and the Carolinas Health systems among the nation’s innovative leaders and applauded the Veteran’s Administration for “investing heavily in treating veteran suicide. In addition, health

plans – particularly those serving dual eligible populations – are investing to reduce the impact of behavioral health on physical health. This is a good sign and one worth closely watching and potentially modeling as results start to emerge.”

Osowski is a frequent speaker and author on critical issues facing Medicaid and Medicare and has provided leadership to commercial, Medicare and Medicaid health plans for more than three decades. Next month he will be speaking at the Medicare Market Innovations meeting in San Diego and in August will be addressing the HEA Dual Eligible Conference in Chicago.

At Strategic Health Group, Osowski has led several recent engagements for clients concerning dual integrated care programs in California, Michigan, Illinois, New Mexico and Hawaii. He is a former senior vice president of corporate development for SCAN Health Plan and also served as a member of the senior management team at Blue Cross of California.

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