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LVBCH Releases New COPD Report Key Geographic Regions in PA are compared to State and National Benchmarks

Bethlehem, PA (June 12, 2017) The *Lehigh Valley Business Coalition on Healthcare (LVBCH)* is pleased to present the first edition of the **Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Report for 2017**. It includes an overview of key demographic, clinical, pharmacotherapy and health resource utilization for COPD patients in the United States (US), Pennsylvania (PA), and four LVBCH metropolitan statistical areas (MSA): Allentown (including Bethlehem and Easton), Harrisburg (including Lebanon and Carlisle), Reading, and Scranton (including Wilkes-Barre and Hazleton).

The overall objective of the report is to provide information to help healthcare providers better serve the needs of their patients with COPD. All data in the report (covering 2012 through 2015) was collected and analyzed by QuintilesIMS, Fairfax, VA, a leading provider of innovative healthcare data products and analytic services. The report provides employers with independent, third-party information against which they can benchmark their own data on patient demographics, professional (provider) and facility (hospital/clinic) charges, service utilization and pharmacotherapy.

In commenting on the report, LVBCH President Tom Croyle stated, “The report is our first attempt to highlight critical issues around the prevalence and complications of COPD, a leading cause of death in the United States. We hope that, through this first report on COPD, we can begin to identify steps for early recognition of COPD so we can begin to take actions towards effective treatment. Our thanks to AstraZeneca and QuintilesIMS for making this information available to our members and the public.”

The 2017 COPD report provides a number of observations that will help providers and employers better meet the needs of employees, such as:

- The majority of COPD patients are males over the age of 40.
- The percentage of COPD patients in LVBCH areas with other comorbid conditions (e.g., hypertension, hyperlipidemia, asthma, anxiety, etc.) was higher than that of the nation.

- The utilization of COPD-related imaging services in PA (47.0%) was higher than that of the nation (44.4%). Of the four LVBCH areas, Allentown had the highest imaging utilization at 45.0% and Harrisburg had the lowest at 42.8%.
- The utilization of COPD-related pulmonary function tests (PFT) in PA (14.4%) was higher than that of the nation (13.4%). Of the four LVBCH areas, Harrisburg had the highest PFT utilization at 13.4% and Scranton had the lowest at 12.3%.
- Reading (\$33,120) and Scranton (\$30,426) report higher average cost per patient to treat severe COPD-related exacerbations than the national average (\$30,390). However, of the four LVBCH areas, only Scranton (\$1,029) recorded lower average cost per patient to treat moderate exacerbations than the national average (\$1,065).
- More PA COPD patients (12.9%) visit the hospital's Emergency Department compared to the national average (11.0%). Among the four LVBCH areas, the proportion of patients with COPD-related Emergency Department visits was the highest in Allentown (14.5%) and the lowest in Harrisburg (8.3%).
- Annual COPD related medication costs were slightly higher for PA COPD patients (\$435 in total per patient) than the nation (\$392). Among the four LVBCH areas, Allentown had the highest COPD medication costs (\$473), and Scranton had the lowest (\$381).

Understanding the characteristics of LVBCH members with COPD allows for early recognition and intervention for people at risk of COPD and its complications, a critical component of disease management. Reports such as this help LVBCH employers design screening and wellness programs to assist their employees in maintaining a healthy life style. The complete COPD report—in pdf version—is available on the LVBCH website at www.lvbch.com.

About LVBCH

LVBCH is a multi-state, not-for-profit, coalition of employers striving to provide access to quality affordable healthcare for their employees. The Coalition's mission is to improve the delivery, cost and quality of health care in our communities through: Collective employer action; Quality and data initiatives; Value based purchasing; and, Providing forums for the exchange of information, ideas and resources. The Coalition is also a member of the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions, the National Quality Forum and The Leapfrog Group. For more information, visit www.LVBCH.com.