HFMA RECOGNIZES THE METROHEALTH SYSTEM AS NATION’S FIRST ADOPTER OF PATIENT FINANCIAL COMMUNICATIONS BEST PRACTICES

(Westchester, IL) — In acknowledgment of excellence in financial interactions with patients, the Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA) has named The MetroHealth System of Cleveland, Ohio, as the nation’s first Adopter of HFMA’s Patient Financial Communications Best Practices. The Adopter program recognizes hospitals, physician practices, and other provider organizations for implementing best practices, such as providing convenient access to information about financial assistance programs and taking steps to ensure that patients understand their financial responsibility for care.

In assessing The MetroHealth System’s approach to patient financial communications, HFMA reviewers found the hospital’s patient-friendly bills, price transparency, and comprehensive information about financial assistance programs and billing and payment procedures to be particularly noteworthy.

“Issues that come up during the billing and payment process can affect patient satisfaction; beyond that, they can also impact patients’ attitudes toward seeking healthcare services in the future,” said HFMA President and CEO Joseph J. Fifer, FHFMA, CPA. “By achieving recognition as an Adopter, The MetroHealth System has demonstrated its commitment to helping patients navigate through this complex process as smoothly as possible.”
HFMA’s Patient Financial Communications Best Practices provide guidance for patient financial communications in multiple care settings, and call for annual training for point-of-service staff.

HFMA convened a blue-ribbon task force to develop these best practices at a time when patients are paying a greater proportion of their healthcare costs out of their own pockets. The task force included representatives from major industry groups, including the American Hospital Association, America’s Health Insurance Plans, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the National Patient Advocate Foundation, among others. The task force was advised by national healthcare policymakers including former HHS Secretaries Leavitt and Shalala, as well as former Senate Leaders Bill Frist and Tom Daschle and Clinton Administration Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick.

More information about HFMA’s Patient Financial Communications Best Practices—including how to apply for recognition as an Adopter—is available at hfma.org/communications.

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About HFMA
With more than 40,000 members, the Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA) is the nation's premier membership organization for healthcare finance leaders. HFMA builds and supports coalitions with other healthcare associations and industry groups to achieve consensus on solutions for the challenges the U.S. healthcare system faces today. Working with a broad cross-section of stakeholders, HFMA identifies gaps throughout the healthcare delivery system and bridges them through the establishment and sharing of knowledge and best practices. We help healthcare stakeholders achieve optimal results by creating and providing education, analysis, and practical tools and solutions. Our mission is to lead the financial management of health care. For more information, visit hfma.org

About The MetroHealth System
The MetroHealth System is a public health system committed to providing health care to everyone in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, and improving the health of the community overall. Its 6,400 employees deliver care to everyone at its main campus, just west of downtown Cleveland, and at 16 health centers. MetroHealth is home to Cuyahoga County’s only Level I Adult Trauma Center and Comprehensive Burn Care Center. In the past year, MetroHealth provided more than one million patient visits in its hospital and health centers.

MetroHealth also is an academic health center committed to teaching and research; each of its active physicians holds a faculty appointment at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. MetroHealth has earned Magnet status, which places it in the top 7 percent of all hospitals nationwide for nursing excellence.

MetroHealth’s mission is, “Leading the way to a healthier you and a healthier community through service, teaching, discovery and teamwork.” For more information, visit www.metrohealth.org.