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## Donaghue Foundation Conference Asks: What Happens After Eureka?

### Connecticut's Leading Private Medical Research Foundation Celebrates Year of Milestones with Third Annual Conference Examining Practical Applications of Healthcare Breakthroughs

HARTFORD, CT, (DATE, 2008). Culminating a year in which it provided more than \$5 million in research grants to organizations throughout New England to bring medical research findings to everyday application, the Patrick and Catherine Weldon Donaghue Medical Research Foundation today announced the program for its third annual *Beyond Eureka!* Conference to be held on Wednesday, April 23rd from 9AM to 2PM at the Hartford Hilton Hotel. This year's conference provides real-life reflections and insights about how researchers and public/private partnerships endeavor to change healthcare practices and the culture at-large to create meaningful, positive shifts in health and health outcomes.

**Dr. Atul Gawande**, surgeon, Harvard professor and author of the recently published book, *Better: A Surgeon's Notes on Performance*, will provide the keynote address for the conference. A recipient of the MacArthur "genius award" in 2006, Dr. Gawande's work and writing have explored the complex matrix of relationships between how physicians learn and practice within the health care system, and how research and best practice information influences the care of patients. He has written and spoken extensively on healthcare performance and outcomes improvement and demonstrated how lessons can be applied to healthcare systems around the world – from hospitals and clinics in India and on the battlefield in Iraq to the leading teaching and research hospitals here in the United States.

"We are thrilled to have Dr. Gawande speaking at this year's conference," said Lynne Garner PhD, Donaghue Foundation Executive Director and newly-appointed Trustee. "His insights into the world of medical research and his perspective on bridging the gap between research and practical application echo the very purpose of the Donaghue Foundation and this annual event. He truly understands the profound impact that research-driven quality improvement can make on millions of lives around the world."

Following Dr. Gawande, a panel of innovators will speak about their own successes and the lessons learned from implementing exciting new healthcare initiatives that tackle the challenges of changing consumer & practitioner behavior, and the organization of care which impact healthcare delivery and outcomes on a day-to-day basis.

**Harlan Krumholz, MD**, Yale cardiologist and Medical School professor, will present the story of the D2B Alliance™, a nationwide network of hospitals, physician champions and strategic partners committed to addressing the urgent need to reduce door-to-balloon [angioplasty] times for patients experiencing ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI). The initiative, championed by the American College of Cardiology, focuses on the fact that only 40 percent of hospitals that perform primary PCI (percutaneous coronary intervention) for patients, consistently do so within the 90 minute threshold recommended by the ACC and American Heart Association. Since 2006, the D2B Alliance has aimed to make rapid, nationwide improvements in door-to-balloon times by providing standardized toolkits and systematic processes of care, as well as information and support necessary to help hospitals improve outcomes in this critical area.

**Elizabeth Pivonka, PhD, RD** is President and CEO of the Produce for Better Health Foundation, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) foundation devoted to increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables. At a time when the obesity crisis looms large over the nation, Dr. Pivonka will discuss how PBH is a driving force behind America's growing awareness that fruits and vegetables consumption and good health go hand-in-hand. Through its 5-a-Day campaign, PBH is working to change nutrition policy, to communicate with consumers, and to improve the food environment – while setting an example for others to follow.

**Veronica F. Nieva, PhD**, Project Director and Editor in Chief of the AHRQ (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality) Health Care Innovations Exchange, will discuss how this comprehensive information exchange program is working to accelerate the adoption of innovations in health care delivery that improve health care quality. Sponsored by AHRQ, the Health Care Innovations Exchange offers healthcare institutions and researchers detailed profiles of innovative activities and tools happening around the world, opportunities to interact with innovators and fellow adopters in learning networks and the ability to participate in educational initiatives to support and implement innovation effectively within healthcare organizations.

“As our speakers will illustrate, change and improvement in health and health care doesn't occur solely as a result of the work in research facilities and universities,” explains the Donaghue Foundation's Dr. Garner. “Improvements in our nation's health happen because of action at the practice, policy and community level. By continually connecting both the academic and the everyday, our goal is to not only accelerate discovery, but also to turn what we know into what we do.”

“These stories of innovation, all unique partnerships between researchers and the real world health care system reflect the goals of the Donaghue Foundation and are great examples of what we are striving to support through our groundbreaking research programs here in Connecticut and throughout New England,” said Sheilah Rostow, Bank of America Senior Vice President, Philanthropic Market Director and Bank of America co-trustee representative to the Donaghue Foundation. “For example this past year the Foundation expanded its reach beyond our state borders through its Patient Safety Research program, by awarding four New England hospitals and healthcare centers two-year grants. These grantees paired senior hospital leaders with academic researchers together to conduct research on the role of organizational leadership on patient safety.

We're convinced that this approach will result in research of "practical benefit"—the mission of the Donaghue Foundation."

### **The Medical Research Gap**

It takes, on average, 17 years for a medical breakthrough to become part of widely accepted clinical practice. Though "evidence based" treatments exist for many medical conditions, recent studies indicate that these established treatments are used only about 50% of the time. What's more, many doctors -- overwhelmed by the volume of new research -- seem unaware of some evidenced-based treatments or find it difficult to incorporate so much information into practice.

Experts agree that stronger relationships between philanthropy, businesses and healthcare providers – with common, shared objectives – may be the key to bridging the gap between discovery and application. The Patrick and Catherine Weldon Donaghue Foundation funds researchers whose work shows promise of a practical benefit. Having witnessed the so-called 'black hole' of scientific discovery, the Foundation works to facilitate the adoption of new findings into practice to improve health.

As home to prestigious academic institutions conducting landmark research with often groundbreaking implications, Connecticut stands to benefit from reducing the time between scientific breakthrough and practical application. With research more widely publicized and the findings used, Connecticut residents and their physicians could be taking advantage of effective clinical treatments and disease prevention techniques. So too would Connecticut-based insurance providers and employers realize the benefits of these care improvements in the face of escalating costs.

### **About the Beyond Eureka Conference**

In addition to the featured speakers and presenters, a number of the Donaghue Foundation's grantees and their research will also be recognized at the conference. Attendance is free and open to the public, with a simple pre-registration required. Those interested can log on to [www.donaghue.org](http://www.donaghue.org) to register or for more information.

### **About the Donaghue Foundation**

The Patrick & Catherine Weldon Donaghue Medical Research Foundation was established by Ethel Donaghue in memory of her parents. The Foundation is a charitable testamentary trust dedicated to furthering the search for medical knowledge of practical benefit to human life and to the quality of the lives of people, particularly in Connecticut. The Foundation focuses on initiatives in the state to strengthen research on health issues, to promote future research leadership, and to put new knowledge to work for public benefit.