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## **IEHP Continues to Earn “Excellent” Accreditation from NCQA**

**San Bernardino, CA, November 23, 2009** — Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP) announced today that they have earned an “Excellent” accreditation status for the second consecutive term from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), a private, non-profit organization dedicated to improving health care quality. The Excellent status is the highest accreditation issued from NCQA for health plans whose programs and clinical quality meets or exceeds rigorous requirements.

The accreditation process includes a comprehensive evaluation of 60 standards and selected HEDIS and CAHPS measures. HEDIS (Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set) is like a report card that represents a health plan’s performance. Health plans must submit audited data on key clinical and service measures like mammography screening rates, well child visits and advising smokers to quit among many others.

Health plans are also scored on customer satisfaction. CAHPS (Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) is a group of surveys asking consumers to report on their health care experiences. The surveys include questions like “Were you able to get care when you needed it?” All NCQA-Accredited plans report CAHPS results.

In addition to the HEDIS and CAHPS evaluation, NCQA also sends a team of trained health care experts, including physicians, to conduct a rigorous on-site survey of the health plan. A national oversight committee of physicians analyzes the team’s findings and assigns an accreditation level.

“It is a great achievement to receive the highest accreditation status of “Excellent” from NCQA, said Dr. Bradley Gilbert, chief executive officer of IEHP. “Our team of Providers, employees and management play an integral role in providing quality healthcare for our 420,000 Members. We are committed to fostering a strong working relationship with our Providers to continue to serve the needs of our Members and our community.”

Health plan accreditation performance results are publicly reported in five categories: Access and Service, Qualified Providers, Staying Healthy, Getting Better and Living with Illness. The standards are intended to help organizations achieve the highest level of performance possible, reduce patient risk for untoward outcomes and create an environment of continuous improvement.

“Earning Excellent Accreditation reflects a health plan's ability to work with its members’ physicians to improve the quality of clinical care, said Margaret E. O’Kane, president of NCQA. “ It shows that the plan is building the kinds of partnerships that are critical to delivering great care and great service.”

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IEHP, Inland Empire Health Plan, a Knox-Keene licensed Health Plan located in San Bernardino, California, is a not-for-profit public agency. The IEHP service area includes San Bernardino and Riverside Counties and currently serves over 420,000 Members in the following Programs: Medi-Cal, Healthy Families, Healthy Kids, and a Medicare Advantage Special Needs Program.

NCQA is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to improving health care quality. NCQA's Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) is the most widely used performance measurement tool in health care. NCQA accredits and certifies a wide range of health care organizations and recognizes physicians in key clinical areas. More than 7 in 10 Americans enrolled in health plans are in an NCQA-Accredited plan. NCQA is committed to providing health care quality information through the Web, media and data licensing agreements in order to help consumers, employers and others make more informed health care choices.