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December 19, 2011

## **Brown & Toland Physicians to participate as Medicare Pioneer Accountable Care Organization**

### *New Model Designed to Offer Better Care to Beneficiaries through Partnership with Medicare*

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. (Dec. 19, 2011) – **Brown & Toland Physicians** announced today it has been selected to participate in the **Pioneer Accountable Care Organization (ACO)** model, a transformative new initiative sponsored by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Innovation Center.

Through the Pioneer ACO Model, Brown & Toland Physicians will work with CMS to provide Medicare beneficiaries with higher quality care, while reducing growth in Medicare expenditures through enhanced care coordination.

“We are of course honored to be selected as a Pioneer accountable care organization by the Innovation Center,” said Richard Fish, Brown & Toland Physicians’ chief executive officer. “Brown & Toland has been building comprehensive and coordinated systems and programs that are designed to provide more information for our physicians at the point of care, improve the quality of care they provide, and reduce costs. We are excited with the opportunity to bring these systems and programs to more Bay Area residents.”

The **Pioneer ACO Model** is designed to encourage the development of ACOs, which are groups of doctors and other healthcare providers who work together to provide high quality care for their patients. As one in a diverse group of leading-edge health care organizations from around the country, Brown & Toland Physicians was chosen specifically by the Innovation Center to test the effectiveness of several models of payment in helping organizations make a rapid transition to higher quality care at a lower cost to Medicare.

“These Pioneer ACOs represent our nation’s leaders in health systems innovation, providing highly coordinated care for patients at lower costs,” said Marilyn Tavenner, Acting Administrator of CMS. “Brown & Toland Physicians has demonstrated significant experience in providing high quality, coordinated care, and we are excited to partner with them,” Tavenner said.

Under the Pioneer ACO Model, CMS will provide incentives for participating health care providers who form an organization to coordinate care for patients. Providers who band together through this model will be required to meet quality standards based upon, among other measures, patient outcomes and care coordination among the provider team.

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CMS will use robust quality measures and other criteria to reward ACOs for providing beneficiaries with a positive patient experience and better health outcomes, while also rewarding Brown & Toland for reducing growth in Medicare expenditures for the same patient population.

Unlike a managed care plan, Medicare beneficiaries will not be locked into a restricted panel of providers. The Pioneer ACO Model is not a health plan or managed care plan. Under the Pioneer ACO Model, beneficiaries seeing doctors participating in an ACO will maintain the ability to see any doctor or healthcare provider, as well as the full benefits associated with traditional Medicare.

Today's announcement was the culmination of a competitive selection process that began in May with the national release of a Request for Applications from CMS. Brown & Toland was selected based on its demonstrated capabilities to offer high quality, coordinated care. The Pioneer ACO Model is one of a number of initiatives developed by the new Innovation Center. The Innovation Center was created by the **Affordable Care Act** to test new models of health care delivery and payment.

### **About Brown & Toland Physicians**

*Brown & Toland Physicians is an independent practice association (IPA) of more than 1,500 physicians serving more than 335,000 HMO and PPO patients across the San Francisco Bay Area. The group has earned numerous awards for quality and innovation over the years, and has been named a California Association of Physician Groups (CAPG) "Elite" group for five consecutive years. In August 2011, Brown & Toland announced an affiliation with Alta Bates Medical Group. For more information, visit [www.browndtoland.com](http://www.browndtoland.com).*

### **Helpful Links**

*For more information about the Pioneer ACO Model, visit the Pioneer ACO website at [www.innovations.cms.gov/areas-of-focus/seamless-and-coordinated-care-models/pioneer-aco/](http://www.innovations.cms.gov/areas-of-focus/seamless-and-coordinated-care-models/pioneer-aco/).*

*The Pioneer ACO Model is one of several initiatives underway at CMS designed to encourage the formation of ACOs. For more information, visit [www.cms.gov/aco](http://www.cms.gov/aco).*

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