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DENVER, Sept. 19, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Kaiser Permanente has been recognized for providing exceptional quality care and member satisfaction in new rankings by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). And now, for the first time this year, the health plan has earned a new designation as the region's "Best Value" health plan for diabetes care factors.

The "Best Value" designation is assigned to plans that excelled in two key requirements--- best quality of care and affordability for members. Kaiser Permanente Colorado is the highest-rated plan to receive that "Best Value" recognition for both Private plans (commercial) and Medicare. Plans that were considered for the "Best Value" designation provided data to NCQA on diabetes care factors, including frequency of inpatient visits and hospitalizations.

"NCQA's Health Insurance Plan Rankings 2013-2014" lists Kaiser Permanente as the top-rated private health plan in Colorado and No. 13 in the nation. The health plan was also recognized for having the No. 4 Medicare plan in U.S. This is the fifth year in a row Kaiser Permanente Colorado has been among the top five Medicare plans in the nation.*

"In order for health care to be recognized as high value, it needs to demonstrate exceptional quality and to be affordable. We are honored to receive this important designation from NCQA

this year, recognizing Kaiser Permanente's commitment to providing our members with top quality care and value," said Regina Berman, Kaiser Permanente Colorado vice president of quality and resource stewardship.

* Reference to "NCQA's Private Health Insurance Plan Rankings 2013-2014" and "NCQA's Medicare Health Insurance Plan Rankings 2013-2014."

"Our excellent performance in these rankings shows we have dedicated physicians and committed care teams who work collaboratively to keep our patients healthy," said Michael Chase, MD, associate medical director of quality for Kaiser Permanente Colorado. "At the end of the day, being recognized as Colorado's top health plan is about providing outstanding care and service to our members."

There were a total of 484 private (commercial) plans and 405 Medicare plans considered in the 2013-2014 NCQA Health Insurance Plan Rankings. Rankings are based on data collected, analyzed and converted to scores by the NCQA. There are three reporting categories, including consumer satisfaction, prevention and treatment.

Kaiser Permanente's integrated approach to care delivery, innovative Web-based tools, and robust system of electronic medical records enables better care coordination for physicians, improved clinical outcomes for patients and a higher quality of care for all. Sally Yerger, a Kaiser Permanente Colorado member experienced that level of care first-hand when she was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a form of cancer that starts in plasma cells in bone marrow.

"My Kaiser Permanente care team was wonderful. What stands out in my mind is the availability of support," said Yerger. "I felt overall that it was a group of people who cared about me as an individual-- who were honest with me and were really warm and supportive. That is what I call quality of care."

Kaiser Permanente Colorado has also been recently recognized for delivering outstanding care to patients with high blood pressure. The health plan was named a 2012 Hypertension Control Champion by Million Hearts™ for achieving a member blood pressure control rate of

82.6---nearly twice the national average.

In addition, 22 Kaiser Permanente Colorado medical offices and 327 individual physicians have earned the top-level Patient-Centered Medical Home designation by NCQA. Also, for the past two years, the U.S. Health and Human Service's Medicare agency, CMS, has awarded Kaiser Permanente Colorado **5 Stars**, the highest possible rating for a Medicare plan.

"NCQA's Health Insurance Plan Rankings 2013-2014" appears online at www.ncqa.org. The rankings will also be published in *Consumer Reports* magazine and on the *Consumer Reports* website.

About NCQA

NCQA is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to improving health care quality. NCQA accredits and certifies a wide range of health care organizations. It also recognizes clinicians and practices in key areas of performance. NCQA's Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) is the most widely used performance measurement tool in health care.

About Kaiser Permanente Colorado

Kaiser Permanente Colorado is the state's largest nonprofit health plan, proudly working to improve the lives and health of Colorado residents for more than 40 years. Kaiser Permanente Colorado provides comprehensive health care services to more than 540,000 members through 26 medical offices and a network of affiliated hospitals and physicians. The health plan was named "[Highest in Member Satisfaction](#)" among Commercial Health Plans by J.D. Power and Associates for the sixth straight year. Kaiser Permanente was also recently recognized as a [2012 Hypertension Champion](#) by Million Hearts™. In 2012, Kaiser Permanente proudly directed more than \$92 million

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