



Press Release – May 23, 2009

BCBSVT President and CEO to Share Best Practices on
Building Organizational Excellence in Rutland

Rutland, VT: Community leaders in Rutland and the surrounding area will have an opportunity to learn successful strategies and practices to improve organizational success from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont on May 8th.

The Vermont Council for Quality will sponsor a Senior Leadership Forum in Rutland along with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont, Rutland Regional Medical Center, Rutland Workforce Investment Board, and Rutland Chamber of Commerce which is scheduled for May 8, 2009 from 8:30-10:30 a.m. The event is hosted by the Rutland Regional Medical Center.

“This is a very exciting opportunity for Rutland organizations and surrounding businesses,” said Vermont Council for Quality President and Director of Operations Laurie Emerson. “Don George will provide firsthand knowledge on how BCBSVT applied an integrated management framework to improve their operations, processes, and results.”

On May 14, 2008 Vermont’s only local health insurance company Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont and its HMO was presented with the 2007 Governor’s Award for Performance Excellence. The award was presented by the Vermont Council for Quality at their Annual Recognition and Award Ceremony.

The Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence Framework is a systems perspective that provides a pathway to performance excellence for leaders who seek to transform their organizations. The framework reflects leading edge, validated management practices essential to achieving optimum performance. It has evolved significantly over time to help organizations address a dynamic environment, focus on strategy-driven performance, address concerns about governance and ethics, and most recently, consider the key decisions driving both short-term success and long-term organizational sustainability.

“We are committed to serving our Vermont customers and members with the highest quality health coverage in the industry,” said Don George, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont’s President and Chief Executive Officer. “To that end, we have adopted a culture of continuous quality improvement, using the tools of performance excellence to track, measure and constantly improve all of our functions and processes. We appreciate the high honor of the Governor’s Award because it recognizes the work of our employees and affirms the processes that we have put in place to serve our customers by building an industry-leading health plan on a small scale here in Vermont.”

The Leadership Forum led by Mr. George, will share how the Criteria framework helped BCBSVT improve key areas that drove business performance results and how they focused on repeatable cycles of improvement. Learn how BCBSVT restructured their organization to build a culture of Performance Excellence and how they faced and addressed the challenges. Mr. George will describe how long-term leadership commitment is the key to sustainability. By evaluating the performance of the organization through an organizational assessment process, BCBSVT improved the key areas that were identified as needing improvement to become a high performing organization. Focusing on a Plan-Do-Check-Act model, more systematic approaches, better deployment, and repeatable cycles of improvement and learning were integrated in their key business processes.

Founded in 1996, the Vermont Council for Quality is a non-profit corporation that helps Vermont organizations improve performance and competitiveness. VCQ is modeled after the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Program and is one of 40 state and local award programs in the United States. VCQ provides continuous improvement education and training, organizational self-assessments, recognition and awards, networking opportunities, serves as a resource referral for information, knowledge, and sharing of best practices within and between Vermont organizations.

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