

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **For Immediate Release**

### **Harbin Clinic Presents Best-Practice Examples To National Audience at Washington Health Summit**

ROME, GA., December 16, 2010 -- Harbin Clinic leaders presented best-practice examples at a national summit in Washington, DC last week that brought together senior executives from the largest and most respected health care organizations in the United States. Representing Harbin Clinic and speaking to the attendees were Ken Davis, M.D., President and Chief Executive Officer, and Al Diaz, M.D., Medical Director.

The summit was held December 10<sup>th</sup> and sponsored by The Advisory Board, the leading American think tank of health care reform. At the summit were selected health care leaders from throughout the United States to address the accountable care movement, sustainable physician enterprises, and performance standards.

“Harbin Clinic is fairly unique among large national physician organizations,” according to Dr. Davis. “While most large physician organizations are owned by hospitals or corporations, Harbin doctors retain ownership of our multi-specialty clinic. As shareholders, the commitment of our doctors to provide outstanding care to the patients is reflected in every aspect of clinic operations.”

“Our focus in Washington,” Dr Diaz explained, “was to report on the success of Harbin Clinic and to outline our progress in the development of an accountable care organization for North West Georgia.”

Accountable care organizations were proposed under the Bush administration with development through a small number of demonstration sites. The passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act has accelerated the development of accountable care organizations, which many believe have the promise to deliver coordinated, low-cost care to patients. The rapid development and expansion of accountable care organizations is a key component of President Obama’s health care reform and has received bipartisan support.

Under the current health care delivery system, each patient care provider receives separate payment for service. Providers include doctors, hospitals, skilled facilities, home health agencies, medical supply companies, pharmaceutical companies and others. Accountable care organizations are collaborations among all providers that receive one payment for patient care. The Accountable care organization coordinates care and disperses the single payment among appropriate member-providers.

Most Accountable Care Organization under development around the country are organized and administered by hospitals. At the Washington summit, Doctors Davis and Diaz stressed the need for physician management of accountable care organizations.

According to Dr. Davis, “We feel strongly that doctors should control patient care and be the focal point for patient care decisions in accountable care organizations.” For this reason, Harbin Clinic has taken the lead in the developing an accountable care organization for North West Georgia. “We are working with the local hospitals to orchestrate the development of an accountable care organization that will protect the patient/physician relationship,” Dr. Davis said.

According to Dr. Diaz, “Our mission at Harbin Clinic is to provide the best available care to our patients.” If accountable care organizations are the future for health care delivery, “we must be more than participants. Harbin Clinic must take a leadership role to make sure there is a continual elevation in the quality of care we deliver to our patients.”

At the Washington summit, Doctors Davis and Diaz presented an overview of Harbin Clinic and a progress report on the clinic’s efforts to work with other providers in North West Georgia to form an accountable care organization. The ground work for an accountable care organization for North West Georgia is in place, and depending on mandates from Washington, Harbin Clinic is ready to respond by formalizing the organization.

Earlier this year, Dr. Diaz made a similar presentation at the national meeting of the American Medical Group Association (AMAG) conference. Harbin Clinic is a member of the Accountable Care Organization Development Collaborative of the AMGA, the only Georgia organization in the collaborative.

According to Dr. Diaz, “We (Harbin Clinic physicians) became physicians to provide care for patients, not lobby in Washington or form accountable care organizations. We take on these tasks to make sure that doctors continue to direct patient care and that our patients continue to receive the quality of care they deserve,” he said.

Harbin Clinic is Georgia’s largest multi-specialty practice with more than 200 providers in 20 locations throughout North West Georgia. For information on Harbin Clinic, visit [www.HarbinClinic.com](http://www.HarbinClinic.com).

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