



**American Hospital
Association**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AHA AWARD OF HONOR TO BE PRESENTED TO
THE SCHWARTZ CENTER FOR COMPASSIONATE HEALTHCARE**

WASHINGTON (April 12, 2012) – The American Hospital Association (AHA) will present its 2012 Award of Honor to the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare, Boston. The award, presented at the AHA’s Annual Membership Meeting on May 7 in Washington, DC, is given to organizations and individuals in recognition of exemplary contributions to the public’s health and well-being through leadership on major health policy or social initiatives.

The Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare (www.theschwartzcenter.org) is a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening the relationship between patients and caregivers and promoting compassionate, patient- and family-centered care. Its Schwartz Center Rounds[®] program allows caregivers at hospitals across the country to come together on a regular basis to discuss the most challenging emotional and social issues they face in caring for patients. The principle is that caregivers are better able to make personal connections with patients, families and colleagues when they have greater insight into their own feelings and emotions.

“The AHA is pleased to honor the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare for recognizing the needs of the women and men on the frontlines of care,” said AHA President and CEO Rich Umbdenstock. “Nurses, physicians and other caregivers may feel the need to be

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strong for their patients and not allow their stress or feelings to show. The Schwartz Center Rounds provide an important opportunity to address their concerns and, ultimately, create a better care experience for patients.”

Schwartz Center Rounds are currently held at 245 hospitals and other health care sites in 35 states and at 11 hospitals in the United Kingdom. Panelists from diverse disciplines participate in the Rounds, including physicians, nurses, social workers, psychologists, allied health professionals and chaplains. After listening to a panel’s brief presentation on a specific case or topic, caregivers in the audience are invited to share their own perspectives on the case and broader related issues.

A comprehensive evaluation has shown that caregivers who attend multiple Rounds sessions report increased feelings of compassion toward patients and increased readiness to respond to patients’ and families’ needs. The program has also been found to improve teamwork, interdisciplinary communication, and appreciation for the roles and contributions of others.

The Center reflects the vision of Ken Schwartz, a Boston health care attorney who died of lung cancer at the age of 40 and found that what mattered most to him as a patient was the compassionate care he received from his caregivers. He founded the Schwartz Center in 1995 – just days before his death – to ensure that all patients receive compassionate care.

Ronald McDonald House Charities, in Oak Brook, Ill., also will receive the 2012 AHA Award of Honor.

Previous Award of Honor winners include organizations such as the Center to Advance Palliative Care, The Institute for Safe Medication Practices and Habitat for Humanity.

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Individuals such as Steven A. Schroeder, M.D., former president and CEO of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Donald M. Berwick, M.D., former administrator of the Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and former president and CEO of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement have also been honored.

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About the AHA

The AHA is a not-for-profit association of health care provider organizations and individuals that are committed to the health improvement of their communities. The AHA is the national advocate for its members, which includes close to 5,000 hospitals, health care systems, networks, other providers of care and 42,000 individual members. Founded in 1898, the AHA provides education for health care leaders and is a source of information on health care issues and trends. For more information, visit the AHA Web site at www.aha.org.