

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Georgia Watch and Health Leaders Hold Community Forum on How to Safely Navigate Healthcare

Georgia Watch, the Campaign for Better Care and Piedmont Healthcare are proud to host “*Town Hall Conversation: Safely and Effectively Navigating Healthcare Today*” on Tuesday, June 28, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Atlanta Community Food Bank. The event will kick off the national Campaign for Better Care’s Healthy Hospital Initiative, which aims to improve patient safety at hospitals and bring about greater clarity when navigating the healthcare market.

“Georgia Watch is proud to be a key partner in these ongoing efforts to make healthcare safer and more accessible for patients,” **said Holly Lang, Georgia Watch’s Hospital Accountability Project Director.** “Healthcare is tremendously difficult to navigate on one’s own. We hope this event will give consumers and patients the information and resources they need to stay safe at our hospitals.”

The community event will serve as the launch of efforts by health leaders to seek pledges from area hospitals, providers and consumer groups to lower infection rates and reduce readmission rates. Called the Partnership for Patients pledge, health advocates are seeking a set of formal commitments from hospitals and providers to better engage with patients, improve provider-patient communication, and increase coordinated, patient-centered care.

“With billions of dollars in resulting costs accrued from hospital readmission every year, patient safety is essential to ensuring both the physical and fiscal health of Georgians,” **Lang said.**

Patient safety has long been a priority for Georgia Watch, as 1.7 million HAIs are reported annually, affect approximately one in every 20 patients, and result in 100,000 deaths. These disturbing statistics are particularly devastating to seniors and others who are most vulnerable to breaches in patient safety.

In addition to discussion and education focusing on patient safety, health experts will cover the consumer impact of the new federal healthcare law. The forum will include health screenings, mobile health units, and food and beverages. Joining Georgia Watch are partners Piedmont Healthcare, Campaign for Better Care, Georgians for a Healthy Future, the Center for Pan Asian Community Services, the Urban League of Greater Atlanta and the Georgia Coalition for the People’s Agenda.

If you are interested in attending or would like additional information, please contact Georgia Watch’s Hospital Accountability Project at hap@georgiawatch.org or by calling (404) 525-1085. All are encouraged to join!

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Founded in 2002, Georgia Watch is a nonprofit, nonpartisan 501-(c)(3) watchdog group focusing on consumer education and research in the areas of health care, insurance, identity theft, consumer energy issues and personal finance. Visit www.GeorgiaWatch.org for more information. To learn more about Georgia Watch’s Hospital Accountability Project, please visit www.GaHAP.org.

