

## ***NEWS RELEASE***

**BCBSNC Contact: Darcie Dearth • 919-765-3005 • [media.inquiry@bcbsnc.com](mailto:media.inquiry@bcbsnc.com)**

**BCBSNC Online Newsroom: <http://mediacenter.bcbsnc.com>**

**Key Physicians Contact: Ray Coppedge • 919-215-1366 • [ray@keymedicalhome.com](mailto:ray@keymedicalhome.com)**

**For Immediate Release: Aug. 23, 2012**

### **BCBSNC and Key Physicians Team Up to Create a Better Patient Experience**

*New ACO will improve health care quality and lower costs for Wake County patients*

**CHAPEL HILL, N.C.** – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) and Key Physicians (Key), an independent, nationally accredited patient-centered medical home network, are launching an Accountable Care Organization (ACO). The collaboration will improve the primary care experience for thousands of BCBSNC customers in more than 48 high quality medical practices across Wake County.

BCBSNC customers in Key's network will benefit from a coordinated team of health care professionals, including Patient Care Advocates, who help manage the overall health of Key's patients. Key's Patient Care Advocates will play an important role in this collaboration. These Advocates help extend care beyond a traditional office setting, working more closely with at-risk patients to help them manage their health on an ongoing basis. Advocates coordinate care in a variety of ways to reduce complications from multiple medications, reduce duplicate tests or procedures, and refer patients who may benefit from health programs.

The new ACO is in early planning stages and will focus on delivering these benefits for Key's patients and BCBSNC customers:

- Care that is centered on patients and offers a better patient experience through high levels of coordination and teamwork across the health care system.
- Extended business hours for primary care visits.
- Access to Patient Care Advocates who will help patients navigate a complex health care system.
- Lower overall health care costs as a result of efficiencies, preventative care efforts and greater levels of primary care services.

“Working with Key Physicians gives us the opportunity to build on a model of care that provides better coordination and health outcomes for our customers,” said Lisa Cade, vice president of network management at BCBSNC. “With this new initiative, we’ll take what we’ve learned from the medical home model a few steps further to improve the health of patients with chronic health issues or significant health risks.”

Key is an association of more than 225 primary care physicians and providers who operate independent practices, including Raleigh Medical Group, Wake Internal Medicine Consultants, Jeffers, Mann and Artman Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, and Family Medical Associates of

Raleigh. Key and BCBSNC will work together to ensure patients get the right care in the right setting to reduce unnecessary hospital admissions and emergency room visits. BCBSNC and practices across the network will also share valuable data to help provide a better patient care experience at a lower cost.

“Our collaboration with BCBSNC will help our physician members and primary care practices better coordinate care for our patients, which allows them to provide higher quality care that is also more cost effective,” said Dr. John Rubino, president of Key Physicians and Raleigh Medical Group physician. “As independent physicians in the community, our priority is the health and well-being of our valued patients.”

BCBSNC is collaborating with others to improve health care quality while reining in medical costs. To learn about other initiatives underway, visit [www.LetsTalkCost.com](http://www.LetsTalkCost.com).

**About BCBSNC:**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina is a leader in delivering innovative health care products, services and information to more than 3.6 million members, including approximately 900,000 served on behalf of other Blue Plans. For 78 years, the company has served its customers by offering health insurance at a competitive price and has served the people of North Carolina through support of community organizations, programs and events that promote good health. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina was named one of the World’s Most Ethical Companies by Ethisphere Institute in 2012. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. Visit BCBSNC online at [bcbsnc.com](http://bcbsnc.com).

**About Key Physicians:**

Key Physicians, A Medical Home Network, is a health care organization comprised of 225+ independent, primary care physicians and providers in the Triangle region of North Carolina. Each of the network’s 48 practice locations is recognized by the *National Committee for Quality Assurance* as a Patient-Centered Medical Home. In early 2012, Key Physicians began facilitating higher levels of coordination and integration among area medical practices to ensure more efficient, higher-quality patient care. Patients throughout the Triangle have called a Key Physicians provider their medical home since 1994. Additional information may be found at: [www.keymedicalhome.com](http://www.keymedicalhome.com)

###