



NEWS RELEASE

# Premier Inc. Launches National Hospital Initiative to Improve Opioid Safety, Partners with American Society of Anesthesiologists

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Brings hospitals together to collaborate on improving pain management strategies

CHARLOTTE, N.C. & CHICAGO--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Premier Inc. (NASDAQ: PINC), a leading healthcare improvement company, is launching a national opioid safety pilot with hospitals to make care safer and reduce patient harm from opioid misuse, dependence and addiction. The American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) will be a key performance improvement partner in the initiative.

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Premier is launching the pilot through its **Hospital Improvement Innovation Network** (HIIN), which is part of the Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services Partnership for Patients program. The effort is focused on measurably improving post-operative opioid pain management by providers, clinicians and patients/families. The Safer Post-operative Pain Management: Reducing Opioid-related Harm pilot will officially launch in September 2017 and run through March 2018. Premier has targeted 30 high performing hospitals to participate.

“Addressing the opioid epidemic calls for the reliable implementation of proven, evidence-based treatment practices and testing new measures and approaches to ensure professionals are trained based on what the evidence has proven to work,” said Blair Childs, senior vice president of public affairs at Premier. “Premier has been working on this with our members, and we are excited to expand our work by launching the Safer Post-operative Pain Management pilot. We are particularly thrilled to be working with the ASA on this effort because of the critical

role physician anesthesiologists play in care delivery. This initiative extends our long-term commitment to collaborate with health systems, the government and other industry organizations to continue down a path of safer pain management practices.”

Though they bring relief to millions of people, opioids can cause serious adverse events. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, overdose deaths involving prescription opioids have quadrupled since 1999. From 1999 to 2015, more than 183,000 people have died in the U.S. from overdoses related to prescription opioids. Oftentimes, opioid addiction can begin with a single prescription following a medical procedure. This, in part, has called for safer pain management practices to become a national priority.

“Opioids continue to be prescribed at alarming rates,” said ASA President Jeffrey Plagenhoef, MD. “As the medical specialty dedicated to the science of pain relief, we will collaborate with Premier to aggregate and disseminate best practices regarding opioid use and prescribing, as well as work to decrease patient reliance on opioids following surgery. ASA physician leaders will serve as a resource to the pilot program hospitals and work with the anesthesiology departments at each location to facilitate adoption of best practices.”

The Safer Post-operative Pain Management pilot will initially focus on adult patients undergoing elective hip and knee arthroplasty, and colectomy surgical procedures. The pilot seeks to help participants redesign their existing best practices and workflows with new pain management strategies, making it easier to do the right thing and provide safer patient care when using opioid medications. This includes partnering with patients and families on pain management expectations, as well as education on the safe use, storage and disposal of opioids, and the prevention of opioid misuse and abuse post discharge. Clinicians at participating hospitals will also receive education on appropriate opioid screening, prescribing, dispensing and administration.

“Across our nation, we have seen the devastating effects of the opioid crisis,” said Neil Meltzer, president and CEO of LifeBridge Health in Baltimore, one of the pilot participants. “To tackle this epidemic, we must be willing to embrace new approaches, innovation and partnerships. We look forward to working with our fellow Premier HIIN member hospitals in this pilot program to offer our caregivers additional collaboration and resources, including education for patients and families on what to expect after they leave the hospital.”

Premier’s HIIN pilot program will support hospitals by providing webinars and technical assistance from industry-leading experts, systematic planning for performance improvement, real-time data collection, the use of standardized process, outcome, harm and cost avoidance measures, peer-to-peer learning, and continuous monitoring, evaluation and refinement of implemented strategies to drive results. Findings from the pilot will be shared across Premier’s HIIN, with Premier and ASA members, and policymakers to shape government initiatives and accelerate safer pain management practices.

ASA and Premier are committed to addressing the problem of opioid misuse and abuse by developing evidence-based solutions to improve pain management practices. Premier will continue to expand this work with its vast network of health systems and industry organizations using technology and collaboration to test and measure the effectiveness of new treatment practices. More information on efforts to address the opioid epidemic can be found on ASA's **When Seconds Count website** and the **Premier Safety Institute website**.

## About the American Society of Anesthesiologists

Founded in 1905, the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) is an educational, research and scientific society with more than 52,000 members organized to raise and maintain the standards of the medical practice of anesthesiology. ASA is committed to ensuring that physician anesthesiologists evaluate and supervise the medical care of patients before, during, and after surgery to provide the highest quality and safest care that every patient deserves. For more information on the field of anesthesiology, visit the American Society of Anesthesiologists online at **asahq.org**. To learn more about the role physician anesthesiologists play in ensuring patient safety, visit **asahq.org/WhenSecondsCount**.

## About Premier Inc.

Premier Inc. (NASDAQ: PINC) is a leading healthcare improvement company, uniting an alliance of approximately 3,750 U.S. hospitals and more than 130,000 other provider organizations. With integrated data and analytics, collaboratives, supply chain solutions, and advisory and other services, Premier enables better care and outcomes at a lower cost. Premier, a Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award recipient, plays a critical role in the rapidly evolving healthcare industry, collaborating with members to co-develop long-term innovations that reinvent and improve the way care is delivered to patients nationwide. Headquartered in Charlotte, N.C., Premier is passionate about transforming American healthcare. Please visit Premier's news and investor sites on **www.premierinc.com** for more information about the company.

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