FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE   **CONTACT:** Chris McNamara
September 5, 2007   (202) 778-3271

Over 500,000 Health Care Providers Now Cutting Costs, Saving Time Through CAQH Administrative Simplification Initiative

Universal Credentialing Datasource® Saving Millions by Eliminating Paper Processes

Washington, D.C. – CAQH announced today that more than half a million U.S. providers are now significantly reducing administrative burden by using its Universal Credentialing Datasource (UCD) service to submit required information for credentialing and use in other business processes, such as provider directories.

According to estimates from a Medical Group Management Association cost analysis, UCD is effectively cutting provider administrative costs by more than $75 million per year or over 2.5 million man-hours (the equivalent of 1,250 full-time employees) – the amount of time required to complete and send the application forms.

"Although this milestone seemed far off when we launched the initiative in 2002, we were pretty certain that UCD could bring needed efficiency and cost savings to provider credentialing," said Robin J. Thomashauer, CAQH executive director. "The growing number of providers, health plans, hospitals, managed care organizations (MCO) and states adopting UCD shows our instincts were correct."

CAQH estimates UCD has eliminated nearly 2 million legacy credentialing applications to date.

Launched in 2002, UCD allows registered physicians and other health professionals in all 50 states and the District of Columbia to enter credentialing information, including their Type I National Provider Identifier, into a single, uniform online application. Free to providers, this process meets the credentialing needs of most health plans, hospitals and other healthcare organizations.

-more-

The provider data-collection service streamlines the initial application and re-credentialing processes, and offers health organizations real-time access to reliable provider information for quality assurance and support services, such as directories and claims processing. All data submitted by providers through UCD is maintained by CAQH in a secure, state-of-the-art data center.

"This initiative is accomplishing what it set out to do – reducing administrative redundancy for physicians and other health care practitioners," said Alan Rosenberg, M.D., Vice President of Medical Policy and Credentialing Programs at WellPoint, Inc., a UCD-participating organization, and President of its Anthem Credentialing Services, Inc. "I think we can say with pleasure and certainty that CAQH's UCD has significantly and positively changed how the industry undertakes provider data collection."

More than 350 health plans, hospitals and MCOs currently participate in UCD. Collectively, participating health plans provide coverage to two-thirds of all Americans with commercial health insurance. Approximately 10,000 – 12,000 new providers register in the service each month.

UCD is supported by America's Health Insurance Plans, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American College of Physicians, the American Health Information Management Association, the American Medical Association, the Healthcare Administrative Simplification Coalition, the Medical Group Management Association and other provider organizations, and recognized by a number of state legislators and insurance commissioners. The UCD application meets all related URAC, National Committee for Quality Assurance and Joint Commission standards.

About CAQH
CAQH is a catalyst for healthcare industry collaboration on initiatives that simplify and streamline healthcare administration. CAQH solutions help promote quality interactions between plans, providers and other stakeholders, reduce costs and frustrations associated with healthcare administration, facilitate administrative healthcare information exchange and encourage administrative and clinical data integration. Visit www.caqh.org for more information.

# # #