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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INTEGRATED HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION RECEIVES PICKER INSTITUTE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN PATIENT CENTERED CARE

OAKLAND, Calif. – Oct. 27, 2005 - The Integrated Healthcare Association (IHA) received The Picker Institute, Inc. Annual Award for Advancement of Patient Centered Care during a ceremony on Oct. 26. The Institute is a world leader in scientific measurement, improvement and the promotion of patient-centered care.

Awards are made annually to recognize outstanding contributions to improving the lives of patients by making interaction with the healthcare system more comfortable. Each winner receives \$10,000. The other winners were Albert G. Mulley Jr., M.D. and John E. Wennberg, M.D., M.P.H, and Initiativkreis Ruhrgebiet (Ruhr Region Initiative) and Boston Consulting Group.

IHA won the award for its innovative pay-for-performance (P4P) program, which measures and rewards quality of care (including patient experience) at 225 physician organizations, representing 35,000 physicians and 6.2 million patients in California.

“We’re honored to receive this prestigious award,” said Tom Williams, executive director of IHA. “It’s an affirmation of the hard work and commitment by the California health plans that participate in P4P, and the dedication of physician organizations to continually improve care and patient satisfaction.”

“The Picker Institute’s mission is to improve the healthcare provider’s understanding of each patient’s values, preferences, and expressed needs,” said Harvey Picker, founder of the Picker Institute.

IHA's P4P program launched in 2002 at a time when health plans had varied approaches to performance measurement, and only a few provided financial rewards for performance. IHA convened competing health plans which then agreed to a common set of measures on which to base the program. In 2004, quality-related performance payouts (based on IHA measures) by health plans to physician organizations totaled over \$37 million. IHA's P4P program is the largest such program in the country.

The Picker Institute (www.pickerinstitute.org), based in Boston, is an independent nonprofit organization that promotes the advancement of patient-centered care, and the improvement of patients' experiences and interactions with their healthcare providers.

IHA (www.ih.org) is a collaboration of California health care leaders committed to quality improvement, accountability, and affordability for the benefit of all California consumers through special projects, policy innovation and education.