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IBM is delighted to share our experience, both as an employer and the world's largest information technology company, at the announcement of the launch of the TransforMED demonstration projects by the American Academy of Family Physicians.

We share the Academy's commitment to a patient-centered healthcare system. IBM has dedicated resources, technology and staff to bring this type of system closer to fruition. A healthcare ecosystem properly organized around its core constituents – patients – can improve quality and costs for all.

IBM is leading a worldwide effort to help business and public-sector organizations develop and implement key components for patient-centered healthcare by offering the technology, solutions and clinical and business processes that will help transform the industry.

As a global leader in helping businesses innovate, IBM supports the development of patient centric systems in multiple countries. In December 2003, the citizens of Denmark were offered an e-Health Portal developed and operated by IBM. The Danish e-Health Portal allows an electronic way for patients, their families and healthcare professionals to obtain information, communicate and maintain an overview of their health records. Similarly, TransforMED aims to improve patient care through transformative practice redesign that takes advantage of tools such as information technology.

In addition, IBM is leading by example and providing patient-centric services to its U.S. workforce. As a result of the patient-centric health programs deployed at IBM, employees are healthier and have lower health expenses than others in our industry. Significant decreases in the number of health risks among IBM employees have resulted from our initiatives. With these health improvements, we have also seen cost benefits. IBM healthcare premiums are 6 percent lower for family coverage and 15 percent lower for single coverage than industry norms. IBM employees benefit from these lower costs as well and pay 26 percent to 60 percent less than industry norms.

Satisfaction also rises with patient-centric healthcare. Since October 2005, when personal health records were first offered to IBM U.S. employees, almost one-third are now taking advantage of this program.

IBM looks forward to the thorough, real-time evaluation of the TransforMED demonstration projects. Transforming primary care will ultimately better serve patients. Projects such as these will help demonstrate the strength of a patient-centric healthcare model.