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## **IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR BLACK PATIENTS IN MISSISSIPPI WITH VENOUS THROMBOEMBOLISM**

PHILADELPHIA, PA – April 1, 2021 – MediCom Worldwide, Inc., a provider of continuing education for healthcare professionals, announces a strategic initiative in partnership with the Mississippi State Medical Association, Mississippi Hospital Association, the National Blood Clot Alliance, and the Mississippi Business Group on Health to improve care disparities and health outcomes for Black Americans in rural Mississippi who are affected by a diagnosis of a potentially life-threatening blood clot.

“Initiatives like this are critical to a state with so many health conditions and funding issues,” says Murray L. Harber, Executive Director, Mississippi Business Group on Health.

There are few public health problems as serious as venous thromboembolism (VTE), which includes deep vein thrombosis (DVT or a blood clot in the leg or arm) and pulmonary embolism (PE or a blood clot in the lung). About 900,000 people in the United States each year are affected by VTE, which is responsible for about 100,000 deaths annually. Recent hospital discharge data and studies from large observational cohorts show that DVT occurs differently by race, with Blacks having the highest rates, followed by Whites then Hispanics and Asians.

“Mississippians live sicker and die earlier in comparison to other state residents. Mississippians who live in rural areas, which describes much of our state's residents, are especially vulnerable to health disparities,” says Timothy H. Moore, President/CEO of the Mississippi Hospital Association. “The Mississippi Hospital Association is proud to participate in this project to help address current health disparities in heart disease and proactively prevent future illness.”

The overall incidence of DVT and PE is 30% to 60% higher in Black than in White patients, who also have a significantly higher rate of 30-day mortality compared with White patients. Studies show that Black patients in the rural Southeast have a significantly higher rate of VTE than Black patients in the rest of the United States that is not seen in White patients.

“The two-phase continuing medical education and quality improvement pilot focuses on clinicians and Black patients with VTE in Critical Access Hospitals across the state, who play a primary role as safety net providers for vulnerable patient populations,” says Isabelle Vacher, Vice President, Grants and Education, MediCom. Outcome measures are designed to align with The Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Project (MBQIP), under the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility (Flex) grant program that provides funding to rural CAHs based on quality measures.

As part of this initiative, MediCom’s work will include input and guidance from individuals directly affected by VTE, as well as collaboration with key patient advocacy organizations, such as the National Blood Clot Alliance, which is the leading patient advocacy organization focused on VTE in the United States.

“The National Blood Clot Alliance (NBCA, [www.stoptheclot.org](http://www.stoptheclot.org)) is excited to be a strategic partner in the *VTE Rural Mississippi Initiative*, says NBCA Board Chair Leslie Lake, who has survived multiple blood clots in her lungs. “This partnership allows us to assist and also give voice to the people affected by VTE who may not have adequate access to related healthcare within rural locations. Working with other organizations, always on behalf of the patient community, we can collectively make significant progress to reduce VTE healthcare inequities and, ultimately, save lives.”

Other key leaders involved in this work include medical experts who are widely recognized at the national level for their clinical work relative to VTE, as well as their efforts to improve the diagnosis and care of people affected by blood clots.

“We are pleased to partner on this initiative to provide national clinical expertise, education, tools, and resources that will help clinicians in Mississippi reduce care disparities and health outcomes for Black Americans in rural Mississippi with VTE,” says Program Chair for the initiative, Elliott R. Haut, MD, PhD, Vice Chair of Quality, Safety & Service, Department of Surgery and Associate Professor of Surgery, Anesthesiology and Critical Care Medicine (ACCM), Emergency Medicine, and Health Policy & Management, The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and The Bloomberg School of Public Health.

“As a physician organization, serving as an advocate for our members and their patients statewide, The Mississippi State Medical Association is aware that both race, and economic factors are at times, predictors of healthcare quality and outcomes in our state,” says MSMA Executive Director, Dr. Claude Brunson. “We are proud to take part in this initiative and remain committed to combatting and eliminating health disparities and improving patient outcomes in rural communities across our state.”

We would like to acknowledge that this program is funded by an educational grant from the Bristol- Myers Squibb and Pfizer Alliance.

For more information and questions about the initiative, please send an email inquiry to [cme@managingcvd.com](mailto:cme@managingcvd.com) and someone will respond to you within 24 hours.

