



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Hospitals Now Able to Analyze Medical Mistakes without Fear of Lawsuits:** *Government creates a safety reporting system similar to the one used by U.S. commercial airlines to collect and share data on errors and near misses.*

**Memphis, TN – (December 2, 2008)** – Continuing concern over preventable harm to patients due to medical error has inspired a government agency to emulate a leading aviation safety system. An immediate outcome from recommendations in the IOM "Crossing the Quality Chasm" series of reports, is the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005 that authorized the creation of Patient Safety Organizations (PSOs). PSOs will provide a secure environment in which clinicians and health care organizations can collect, aggregate, and analyze data that enable the identification and reduction of risks and hazards associated with patient care. Supporters note that fear of disclosure and isolated, non-standardized data have hampered the potential learning from data collected on patient safety events. Similar to NASA's Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS), PSOs allow for voluntary participation of standardized and confidential reporting and analysis of data on adverse medical events, without the fear of legal discovery.

ASRS is the world's largest repository of aviation human factors information. Pilots anonymously report as many as 40,000 mistakes per year to this secure data base system maintained by NASA. Tracking reported errors for more than 30 years has allowed researchers to effectively pinpoint problems within the aviation system, identify safety risks and proactively address the problems before flying customers are jeopardized. In an effort to achieve similar success, the government has designed a health care safety reporting system utilizing multiple data collection agencies designated as Patient Safety Organizations.

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) recently listed Human Performance Technology Group (HPTG) as one of the first PSOs. HPTG president Lindsey Donges, a commercial airline pilot, familiar with the benefits of NASA's ASRS system, created his company after experiencing errors in his own healthcare. HPTG offers a proven communication and data analysis/measurement application similar to NASA's system called KBCore<sup>SM</sup>. Powered by KBCore<sup>SM</sup>, HPTG's customized Web-based data collection modules capture, analyze, share, and manage hospital-wide patient safety data from multiple hospitals in a standardized format and with a primary focus on learning, aggregating, and building knowledge.

"I personally lived through a culture change in aviation over the past 35 years and I can tell you first hand that the culture of team building, communicating and knowledge building is desperately needed in the dynamic environment of practicing medicine in hospitals of the future," says Captain Lindsey Donges. "LifeWings and Human Performance Technology Group were both born from the current culture of aviation and utilize 21<sup>st</sup> century forward thinking in bringing true quality improvements to healthcare and its human element."

Ensuring hospitals get the maximum benefit from this modern, new approach for embedding a proactive, preventive and predictive patient safety knowledge communication and analysis system in hospitals, HPTG is collaborating with LifeWings Partners, the nation's largest provider of aviation-based safety systems for hospitals. LifeWings' Crew Resource Management (CRM) program, built by a former Top Gun instructor and a group of commercial airline pilots, former astronauts, physicians, nurses and risk managers, has been proven to significantly and measurably reduce errors, increase patient and employee satisfaction, reduce turnover, and cut healthcare costs. Taught to more than 13,000 high-performance medical team members each year, the LifeWings system has been a resounding success at scores of institutions. Healthcare facilities using the program have seen error rates reduced ten-fold, observed mortality rates cut by 43%, and surgical count errors decreased by 50%.

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"The medical teams we work with are, in many respects, just like flight crews. They are extremely skilled, highly dedicated and disciplined professionals who take their work seriously. We find that the practices developed for the LifeWings CRM program resonate with these expert workers," said Captain Stephen Harden, president and co-founder of LifeWings Partners LLC. "We are pleased to collaborate with HPTG, to strengthen our efforts in improving the safety and quality of patient care nationwide."

For the first time, HPTG and LifeWings will appear together at IHI's National Forum on Quality Improvement in Health Care, the country's largest patient safety conference, in Nashville, TN, December 9-11<sup>th</sup> at the Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center, Ryman C, Booth 321. They will introduce an operational model of a PSO to hospital representatives and healthcare professionals who are eager to implement this new system in the expectation of learning about medical errors and improving overall performance, healthcare quality, and patient safety.

#### **About LifeWings Partners LLC:**

LifeWings Partners was founded by a former U.S. Navy Top Gun instructor, a commercial airline pilot, and two physicians who are former NASA astronauts. LifeWings' practical and effective teamwork training programs are highly effective in reducing human error and currently involve the training of more than 13,000 high-performance medical team members per year. Measurable results are found in all LifeWings' initiatives. To find out more, please visit [www.SaferPatients.com](http://www.SaferPatients.com).

#### **About Human Performance Technology Group:**

Human Performance Technology Group (HPTG) has successfully made quality improvement and patient safety its mission by delivering a proactive model that instills a culture of communication and learning to healthcare systems. Recently designated a Patient Safety Organization (PSO), HPTG provides a full array of analysis and problem solving capabilities through easy to use Web-based data collection, powered by KBCore<sup>SM</sup>. HPTG encourages all participants in the healthcare system to collaborate and perpetuate a continual process for improvement and better outcomes. To find out more, please visit [www.humantechgroup.com/](http://www.humantechgroup.com/).

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