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**News Release**

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**Patient Safety Action Network Launched to Mobilize Patient Voices to Improve Care**

**Nationwide Coalition of Advocates and Organizations Join Forces**

**to Hold Health Care Providers Accountable for Keeping Patients Safe**

Consumers Union, the advocacy division of Consumer Reports, and a group of patients who have suffered from medical harm, their loved ones, and concerned advocates launched the Patient Safety Action Network (PSAN) today.  The nationwide network, representing 14 states, is a patient-driven, patient-led coalition dedicated to raising awareness about preventable medical harm and holding health care providers accountable for improving care and reducing needless suffering and deaths.

“Far too many Americans are harmed by preventable medical errors at the hands of healthcare providers who fail to consistently follow safe practices,” said Lisa McGiffert, director of the Safe Patient Project for Consumers Union, a founding member of PSAN. “These advocates know first-hand how devastating medical harm can be.   Health care providers and policymakers need to listen to injured patients and their families as they work to make our healthcare system safer.”

PSAN’s mission is to enact policies that promote transparency about medical errors; reduce healthcare acquired infections and other medical harm; hold doctors accountable for misconduct and harmful care; and improve drug and medical device safety.

An estimated 8.8 million patients are harmed in hospitals annually, according to Consumers Union, which has partnered with many of the coalition’s members over the past decade to enact patient safety reforms at the state and federal level.   Consumers Union has regularly brought them together for lobbying, networking, and trainings, creating a cohesive community of advocates who speak up for harmed patients at legislative hearings, before medical boards, and during state and federal health agency proceedings.  Many of PSAN’s members formed their own nonprofit organizations after they or a member of their family were harmed by unsafe care and their stories have been featured in countless media stories.

“Our patient stories are all different but our mission is the same,” said Yanling Yu, Ph.D., a member of the PSAN Leadership Committee and co-founder of Washington Advocates for Patient Safety.  “We are dedicated to making a difference, individually and collectively, so that what happened to us and our loved ones will not happen to others.”

Preventable medical harm is the third leading cause of death in the U.S.  A study by John James, founder of Patient Safety America and a member of PSAN, found that 440,000 patients lose their lives prematurely to preventable medical errors every year.   Estimates of the annual financial impact of medical errors and infections vary widely, with peer reviewed studies finding costs ranging from $19 billion to $45 billion to $147 billion.

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