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## **FAU Releases Next-Generation of the INTERACT Quality Improvement Program**

### ***New Tools Offer Significant Improvements in Reducing Unnecessary Hospitalizations***

**BOCA RATON, FL (February 13, 2013)** — Florida Atlantic University’s Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine has announced the release of new INTERACT Version 3.0 Tools. Interventions to Reduce Acute Care Transfers (INTERACT), a quality improvement program, facilitates the early identification, evaluation, documentation and communication about changes in the status of residents in skilled nursing facilities (SNF), and provides the necessary tools to manage conditions before they become serious enough to necessitate a hospital transfer.

INTERACT 3.0 tools are designed to assist SNFs in improving their tracking and root cause analyses for hospitalization rates, as well as improve communication with local hospital providers. New tools have been included in the program to enable proper medication reconciliation for medication orders when patient transfers from the hospital to a facility occur. Additional tools to support Advanced Care Planning practices also have been added, as well as updates to both the Stop and Watch, and Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation (SBAR) Communication Form and Progress Note tools, giving clinicians a more organized way to document patient assessments and information to fully inform the treating physician of changes in condition to support appropriate modifications to the care plan in order to avoid hospitalization.

“Through the guidance of both industry professionals using the INTERACT II program and national experts, we have taken the INTERACT initiative from a toolkit concept to a complete and comprehensive quality improvement program,” said Dr. Joseph Ouslander, M.D., senior associate dean of geriatric programs at FAU’s Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, who has led an interdisciplinary team in the development of the INTERACT program. “With the contributions made by these individuals, the INTERACT project team has delivered improvements specifically designed to further enable and support SNFs to more proactively address and prevent 30-day hospital readmissions than ever before.”

The INTERACT Version 3.0 tools are available for download in paper-based format through the INTERACT web site. Unlike previous versions of the tools, FAU’s Office of Technology Transfer will restrict usage or integration within electronic environments to only those platforms that meet standards designated by

eINTERACT. eINTERACT, a joint initiative between FAU and PointClickCare (<http://www.pointclickcare.com>), is the only electronically based format for the INTERACT program, including the INTERACT Version 3.0 tools, currently approved by FAU. Other electronic health records (EHR) vendors will have the opportunity to utilize INTERACT according to eINTERACT specifications later this year. Designed to optimize the INTERACT quality improvement tools for a software environment, the eINTERACT specifications embed the methods for risk identification, evaluation, documentation, and inter-provider communication for specific changes in clinical conditions that commonly result in potentially preventable hospitalizations, directly within the electronic clinical workflow framework of an EHR platform.

For more information on the INTERACT program and INTERACT Version 3.0 tools or to download the new tools, visit <http://interact2.net/>. For more information on eINTERACT, visit <http://www.einteract.info/>.

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**About Florida Atlantic University:**

*Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU's world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of three signature themes – marine and coastal issues, biotechnology and contemporary societal challenges – which provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU's existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit [www.fau.edu](http://www.fau.edu).*

**About INTERACT**

*INTERACT was first designed as a project supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and further tested in a project supported by the Commonwealth Fund under Dr. Joseph Ouslander's leadership. The program was initially implemented at 25 community-based nursing homes in Florida, Massachusetts and New York over a six-month period and resulted in a 17 percent reduction in hospital admissions among the residents. The reduction was even greater in homes that were most engaged in implementing the INTERACT intervention. The tools target three key strategies to reduce potentially avoidable hospitalizations: preventing conditions from becoming severe enough to require acute hospital care; managing selected acute conditions in the nursing home; and improving advance care planning for residents among whom a palliative or comfort care plan, rather than acute hospitalization, may be appropriate. Using INTERACT's standardized protocol and working with an on-call nurse practitioner who visits the nursing home daily, the patient can be treated in the nursing home without any complications and only costing Medicare about \$200 instead of \$10,000 or more. Using such care in nursing homes nationwide could improve care, reduce complications from hospitalizations, and avoid hundreds of millions of dollars in Medicare expenditures annually. For more information about INTERACT, visit <http://interact2.net/index.aspx>.*