



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Misdiagnosis is an Overlooked and Growing Patient Safety Issue and Core Mission of Isabel Healthcare**

*Survey shows 1 in 6 people has experience with wrong diagnosis*

**Reston, Va. (March 20, 2006)** – Isabel Healthcare, Inc., developers of the Web-based diagnosis decision support system to improve the quality of health care, today released the results of a survey on medical mistakes in the United States. The survey revealed that half of all the mistakes reported were considered misdiagnosis.

According to the survey results, 1 in 6 U.S. adults, 35% of respondents, said that they had experienced a misdiagnosis either directly or through a friend or relative over the last five years and one quarter of those medical mistakes resulted in permanent harm or death. Further, these results indicate that there has been no improvement since a Harris Poll eight years ago, conducted on behalf of the National Patient Safety Foundation, showed the same result.

Dr. Robert M. Wachter, a national leader in the field of medical errors and patient safety and a Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) said, “The modern patient safety movement has focused our attention on procedural mishaps – cutting off the wrong leg, prescribing the wrong medicine – but has largely ignored a problem every bit as important: misdiagnosis. Today in America, hundreds of patients will be falsely reassured and panicked, and many of them will be medicated, scanned and even cut open because of the wrong diagnosis.”

The survey, conducted by YouGov and commissioned by the Isabel Medical Charity, included 2201 respondents and was carried out in November 2005. Survey results further showed that the main concern of 55% of people when seeing their family practitioner was being correctly diagnosed and this also remains a key concern for 23% of people when being seen in hospital. More than two thirds (70%) of those questioned for the survey agreed that they

would approve or be reassured if their physician referred to a specialized computer system which could remind them of likely diagnoses.

“Like most medical errors, this one will not be fixed by trying to magically mint flawless physicians,” continued Dr. Wachter, Associate Chairman of UCSF’s Department of Medicine and Chief of the Medical Service at UCSF Medical Center. “Rather, it will require that we train doctors how to avoid common cognitive speedbumps and we give them the tools – including computerized decision support – that will help them come to the right answers for their patients.”

“Isabel, in clinical trials and independent studies, has been shown to enhance and complement the diagnosis skills and knowledge of physicians,” said Joseph Britto, M.D., co-founder and CEO of Isabel Healthcare, Inc. “Isabel is perfectly positioned to help decrease diagnosis decision error and improve quality of care and patient safety.”

**Editors’ Notes:** The survey research was conducted online by YouGov on November 11-16, 2005. YouGov interviewed a representative sample of 2,201 U.S. 18+ adults. Results are weighted to be representative of the U.S. adult population. A copy of the full findings is available in the Media Center at [www.isabelhealthcare.com](http://www.isabelhealthcare.com).

**About Isabel Healthcare, Inc.**

Isabel Healthcare is an award-winning company that has developed a clinical decision support system designed to improve the quality of healthcare. A unique feature of the system is Isabel Healthcare’s Diagnosis Reminder System which helps providers improve patient safety and quality of care by enhancing their cognitive and diagnosis skills. The Isabel Medical Charity is the company’s founding shareholder. For more information about Isabel Healthcare visit [www.isabelhealthcare.com](http://www.isabelhealthcare.com).

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