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For Immediate Release

May 12, 2009

News Release

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Decentralization Hampers Effective Compliance Education and Training *AAHC Recommends Strategic Approach to Infrastructure and Leadership*

WASHINGTON, May 12 – Education and training is a major link between clinical research and regulatory compliance at academic health centers, and must be strategically assessed and developed, according to *Research Compliance Education and Training Programs: Responding to a New Regulatory World*, a new report from the Association of Academic Health Centers (AAHC).

Based on interviews with chief compliance officers and research administrators at academic health centers nationwide, the report addresses the infrastructure for research compliance education and training as well as administration, management, policies, curricula, and communication activities. The report shows a critical function within academic health centers evolving to accommodate new regulatory demands. Findings also reveal significant infrastructure issues that hamper effectiveness, including highly decentralized program development, dispersed leadership, variability in implementation and enforcement, limited standardization of the training mechanisms, and a lack of strategic planning.

To strengthen research compliance education and training programs, the AAHC recommends:

- Implementing a comprehensive, institution-wide strategic plan that addresses consolidation and leadership with working knowledge of the education and training function;
- Incorporating a strong communications plan into the strategic plan;
- Addressing human resource policies and procedures that create barriers to education and training, and standardize job titles and descriptions;
- Exploring creative solutions, including technologies to engage more constituencies;
- Developing and implementing an evaluation plan to monitor success of training offerings; and
- Establishing mechanisms to collaborate across the academic health center community.

“Research compliance education and training is a critical, and ever expanding, function that must be addressed in a strategic, coordinated fashion across the academic health center and the university,” says AAHC President Dr. Steven A. Wartman, adding that “Integration must take place throughout the academic health center. Systemic change that includes education and training will help ensure that the nation’s research enterprise functions to its full capacity.”

The AAHC is a national non-profit association dedicated to advancing the nation’s health and well-being through the vigorous leadership of academic health centers.

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