**\*\*\*NEWS RELEASE\*\*\***

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***Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries* applauds creation of new, independent Healthcare Sharing Accreditation Board**

*Accreditation Board to verify trustworthiness by outlining extensive and rigorous audit and governance standards*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — Health Care Sharing Ministries will soon be able to demonstrate clearly and powerfully how they measure up against the highly demanding requirements of the new Healthcare Sharing Accreditation Board. In addition, policymakers, regulators, other stakeholders, and especially members of the public who are exploring joining a Health Care Sharing Ministry will be able to readily identify organizations that meet rigorous operating, financial and governance standards.

The new accreditation board is now receiving applications from Health Care Sharing Ministries. Accredited ministries will be able to publicize the credential for one year before re-applying for accreditation.

***Katy Talento, the executive director of the*** ***Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries*** ***(Alliance,*** [***ahcsm.org***](http://ahcsm.org/)), said the accreditation standards were painstakingly created and will bring confidence and assurance to prospective and current members.

***“The Alliance celebrates the launch of the independent Healthcare Sharing Accreditation Board,” stated Talento. “The Board has adopted a set of extensive and rigorous standards that will identify the Health Care Sharing Ministries that stand out as trusted communities for people of faith who are looking for a health care solution that is consistent with their beliefs and their budget.”***

The newly announced Healthcare Sharing Accreditation Board is an independent, non-profit entity, and is independent of the ***Alliance***. The announcement confirms that neither it nor its voting board members are affiliated with or have an interest in any Health Care Sharing Ministries. The board members have a broad range of experience in government, law, financial management, healthcare, and sharing ministry governance. The board members are:

**Diane Black**, Former Congresswoman from Tennessee

**James Lansberry**, Former EVP, Samaritan Ministries

**Dave Cram**, CPA, specialist in religious non-profit activities

**Josh Heidelman**, Castaneda + Heidelman, LLP, an attorney experienced in non-profit law

**Mary Mayhew**, President and CEO, Florida Hospital Association

The Healthcare Sharing Accreditation Board said the standards against which applicant organizations will be evaluated include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

* Legal structure and governance
* Organizational management and compensation
* Conflicts of interest and related party transactions
* External communications and marketing
* Enrollment processes
* Written acknowledgements from members
* Published sharing guidelines
* Financial sharing processes, including processing time, dispute resolution and appeals, total amounts shared and not shared among members, etc.
* Expense ratio
* Membership contribution guidelines and management processes
* Audited financial statements and IRS Form 990

***“Policy makers and other stakeholders can take comfort in the consumer protection impact of having a list of accredited Health Care Sharing Ministries,” Talento says. “Going forward, the Alliance will be governed only by Health Care Sharing Ministries who are committed to undergoing the accreditation process.”***

Founded in 2007 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., ***the Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries*** is a 501(c)(6) trade organization representing the common interests of Health Care Sharing Ministry organizations which are facilitating the sharing of health care needs (financial, emotional, and spiritual) by individuals and families, and their participants. ***The Alliance*** engages with federal and state regulators, members of the media, and the Christian community to provide accurate and timely information on Health Care Sharing Ministries.

To learn more about the ***Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries,*** visit [www.ahcsm.org](http://www.ahcsm.org/) or follow the ministry on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AllianceHCSM) or [Twitter](https://twitter.com/AllianceHCSM).

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**To interview a representative from *The Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries,* contact** [**Media@HamiltonStrategies.com**](mailto:Media@HamiltonStrategies.com)**, Beth Harrison, 610.584.1096, ext. 105, or Deborah Hamilton, ext. 102.**