

HEALTH CARE GROUPS ANNOUNCE HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COLLABORATION

Leaders from two major health provider groups, and health information organizations representing the state's two largest cities announced today that they intend to work together toward the development of a statewide health information exchange. Representatives of the Kansas Hospital Association, the Kansas Medical Society, the Kansas City Bi-State Health Information Exchange and the Wichita Health Information Exchange have agreed to collaborate on the project.

The American Reinvestment & Recovery Act of 2009 included a significant commitment by the federal government to establish electronic health records for all Americans, and to create networks through which essential clinical patient information can be exchanged electronically among providers in a secure manner that protects privacy while improving quality, care coordination, and reducing costs.

The four health care groups have all been active participants in the year-long process led by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment through the eHealth Advisory Council to create an over-arching framework that will establish standards for approval, operation and oversight of health information exchanges. The groups intend to continue to support and work closely with the KDHE-led planning effort, which is expected to submit its strategic and operational plans to the federal government for approval by the end of August.

The collaboration by the four groups arose out of a shared belief that a statewide health information exchange developed through the combined efforts of the provider community and the leading health information organizations in Wichita and Kansas City will put the state in the best possible position to:

- ensure that the core focus of the HIE is on protecting patient privacy while improving patient care coordination and quality;
- ensure that the costs of operating the HIE are fairly and appropriately shared by all stakeholders, and structured to minimize barriers to participation by all providers;
- ensure that the health information exchange is available to and serves the needs of providers and patients in rural and medically underserved areas of the state;
- achieve efficiencies of scale in the purchase and implementation of the core technology infrastructure required by a health information exchange; and
- capitalize upon the unique strengths that local communities and regions bring to the health information exchange, and ensure that individual regions or communities have the decision-making authority to address local or regional health care initiatives. (end)

Media contact information:

Cindy Samuelson	Kansas Hospital Association	785.233.7436
Allison Peterson	Kansas Medical Society	785.235.2383
Laura McCrary	Kansas City Bi-State Health Information Exchange	816.474.4240
Jon Rosell	Wichita Health Information Exchange	316.683.7557