

May 2008

www.nitc.ne.gov

eHealth News from the NITC eHealth Council

Contents

Nebraska News

- Telehealth benefits patients, providers 1
- NeHII continues successful path 2
- Rural health grant aids SNBHIN 2
- Thayer County providers go live 3
- Western Nebraska HIE researches vendors 3
- eHealth Council will meet May 29 3
- Nebraska HISPC will meet May 30 3

National News

- Health IT among governors' priorities 3
- Web sites promote e-prescribing 4
- iGuard.org launches new tool 4
- State RHIO project publishes reports 4
- 2008 Great Plains TRAC Conference 4

Nebraska News

Telehealth benefits patients, providers

The Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network is improving the quality of care and providing cost savings. The network allows Faith Regional Health Service to be directly connected to ten hospitals, three public health departments, and indirectly to the entire state. A recent article in the Norfolk Daily News highlights Faith Regional's use of the telehealth network for teleradiology. Carol Rosenbaum, Faith Regional's telehealth coordinator, says teleradiology is a major component of Faith Regional's telehealth network. There have been a total of 9,700 teleradiology procedures from July 2006 to February 2008. Using teleradiology makes it possible for patients in rural hospitals to have x-rays read in minutes instead of hours.

[The Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network Usage Report of 2007](#) indicates that hospitals saved \$1,153,461 saved in travel time and \$1,122,231 in mileage costs for education/conference, administrative meetings, and interviewing/testing. In 2007, there were 997 consults, excluding teleradiology. Public health departments have saved \$122,464 in mileage costs and \$117,725 in travel time. The total number of miles saved per hub and sites was 2,313,878.

eHealth News

NeHII continues successful path

On March 28th, the interim board of directors of NeHII took a major step in corporate governance, approving the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and forming NeHII, Inc. This major step included the election of the corporation's first permanent Board of Directors, who will lead the efforts of the collaborative toward its primary goal of improving the level of health care by implementing one of the first statewide Health Information Exchanges (HIE) of its kind. The next step in the process is the application for 501(c)(3) status, granting the Nebraska corporation non-profit status.

Newly elected officers include:

President: Harris Frankel, MD

Vice President: Ken Lawonn

Secretary: George Sullivan

Treasurer: Steve Martin

Elected Directors: Delane Wycoff, MD, Steve Martin, Ken Lawonn, Michael Westcott, MD, George Sullivan, and Lisa Bewley (three additional directors are yet to be elected)

Appointed Directors: Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy, Kevin Conway (Professional Organizations Rep.), Deb Bass (Interim Executive Director), and Sandy Johnson (Consumer Representative)

Further headway has also been made toward the pilot with the completion of the Pilot Implementation and Management Plan. The essential purpose of the pilot will be to evaluate the HIE's connectivity, functionality, and usability, and also to identify benefits for each user group. Pilot participant commitment has been secured from various health care providers, including Alegent Health System, The Nebraska Medical Center, and Methodist Health System.

Additional ongoing activities include vendor negotiation, Business Plan updates, financial support discussions, and corporate involvement. Finally, NeHII looks to conduct discussions with other Nebraska RHIOs to further its efforts in becoming the statewide "Umbrella" HIE. All these activities will ensure Nebraska is at the forefront of developing a state-wide HIE.

Rural grant aids SNBHIN

Blue Valley Behavioral Health Center, a private non-profit corporation that serves fifteen counties in Southeast and East Central Nebraska and a member of the Southeast Nebraska Behavioral Health Information Network (SNBHIN), received a Rural Health Network Development Grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration. Through the grant, Blue Valley Behavioral Health will receive \$180,000 a year for three years.

The grant will provide partial funding for a network director as well as funding for technology that will facilitate Behavioral Health Information Exchange. The technology funding will provide for development of system architecture design, equipment and implementation. Region V Systems and other urban partners are contributing toward the funding of a network director. Partners in the project include Heartland Health Alliance, Blue Valley Behavioral Health Center, Region V Systems, BryanLGH Medical Center, Lancaster County Community Mental Health Center, Saint Monica's Home, the Southeast Rural Physicians Alliance, Lancaster County Medical Society and Health Partners Initiative. Fifteen organizations providing behavioral health care in Southeast Nebraska have been identified as potential participants in SNBHIN.

eHealth News

Thayer County providers go live

Health care providers in Thayer County and surrounding communities in Nebraska and Kansas went live with an interoperable health information network in April. The Southeast Nebraska Health Information Network (SENHIE) connects Thayer County Health Services in Hebron, five rural health clinics, a home health agency, a nursing home and an assisted living facility, several EMS units, a hospital-owned retail pharmacy and an independent retail pharmacy, and St. Elizabeth Regional Health System in Lincoln. The project is funded with a \$1.6 million Critical Access Hospital, Health Information Technology (HIT) grant. The Office of Rural Health in the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) applied for the grant and is responsible for completion of the work under it.

Western Nebraska HIE researches vendors

The Western Nebraska Health Information Exchange (WNHIE) continues to make progress. The project is investigating the following components of the health information exchange:

- Master Patient Index
- Record Locator Service
- Possibly an Electronic Medical Record for those clinics that don't currently have one
- Revenue Cycle Management product

An RFP has been issued and vendor demonstrations have been held. It is possible that more than one vendor will be selected to perform the functions. Selections are expected to begin within the next several months. A final draft of the user's agreement has been developed.

eHealth Council will meet May 29

The eHealth Council will meet on Thursday, May 29 from 1:30 to 4:30 PM at the University of Nebraska Technology Park, 4701 Innovation Drive. The agenda will be posted at the NITC Web site (www.nitc.ne.gov).

Nebraska HISPC will meet May 30

The Nebraska Health Information Security and Privacy Committee will meet **Friday**, May 30, 2008, with the full Workgroup meeting from 10:00-11:00 AM and the Education and Legal Committees meeting from 11:00 AM-12:00 PM. The location is in Conference Rooms LL-D and LL-F, Lower Level of the State Office Building, Lincoln, NE. The phone bridge number is (402) 472-6296.

National News

Health IT among governors' priorities

INPUT recently released a new report that analyzed governors' technology priorities. Health IT was included in 27% of the state of the state speeches in 2008, up from 14% in 2007. In state of the state speeches for 2008, 42 governors proposed 1,045 initiatives. Consolidation and transparency are also important issues for state governments. Through transparency Web sites, governors want to gain citizen trust by allowing citizens to see how government dollars are spent. Two governors pushed for technology consolidation, and several others are requesting funding for enterprise technology consolidation. Through transparency and consolidation there are potential benefits for health IT, which include efficiency and patient quality and safety.

eHealth News

The report is available at <http://SoS08.input.com>.

Web sites promoting e-prescribing

Pharmacies connected to the Pharmacy Health Information Exchange operated by SureScripts are sponsoring a campaign to raise consumer awareness of e-prescribing. A new Web site (www.learnabouteprescriptions.com) explains e-prescribing and its benefits. Consumers can search by zip code to find physicians who e-prescribe and pharmacists that accept e-prescribing. Video clips of pharmacists, physicians, nurses and medical staff, and consumers discussing the benefits of e-prescribing are available from the Web site.

Physicians can learn more about e-prescribing at www.GetRxConnected.com. Created under the auspices of The Center for Improving Medication Management, GetRxConnected.com contains information and guidance for an estimated 150,000 prescribers located throughout the U.S. that are currently using electronic medical record (EMR) and other clinical software to fax prescriptions to pharmacies. Through GetRxConnected.com, physicians and their staffs can find out if their existing software is compliant with the new Medicare regulations and can receive a free, personalized report to help them request an electronic connection to pharmacies through their vendor.

iGuard.org launches new tool

iGuard.org, a free, patient-driven online healthcare community, offers prescription drug safety information and live updates on how medications are working by posting real-time reports of side effects experienced by members. The site summarizes the likelihood of adverse events into a single rating. Subscribers can enter personalized health and medication his-

tory and can be alerted of serious drug interactions. Subscribers can also print out a medication list to share with health care providers.

State RHIO project publishes reports

The State RHIO Consensus Project released two reports on the development of state level health information exchange initiatives:

- [Final Report Part I: State Level Health Information Exchange: Roles in Ensuring Governance and Advancing Interoperability \(March 2008\)](#)
- [Final Report Part II: State Level Health Information Exchange: Coordinating Policies that Impact the Access, Use, and Control of Health Information \(March 2008\)](#)

To view reports, executive summaries, and appendix visit the State RHIO Consensus Project at: www.staterhio.org.

2008 Great Plains TRAC Conference

Sioux Falls, SD will have a TRAC (Telehealth Resource and Assistance Center) Conference on June 2nd and 3rd. This conference is specifically design for individuals directly involved in telehealth or telemedicine activities or planning.

Registration information is available at:

<http://www.avera.org/avera/gptrac/gptracconference/2008/gptc2008.aspx>.

To receive *eHealth News from the NITC eHealth Council*, please contact Anne Byers, by calling 402 471-3805 or e-mailing anne.byers@nebraska.gov.

Check out the eHealth Clearinghouse at www.nitc.ne.gov/eHc/clearing/.

Nebraska Information Technology Commission
Office of the CIO
501 South 14th Street
P.O. Box 95045
Lincoln, NE 68509-5045

