

FOCUS

Volume 4, No. 4 ♦ Fall 2007



Community Health Care Services Foundation, Inc.

*the premier educational resource
for home care and hospice*

inside: worker training is key to
home care's future

The alphabet soup of health technology

By Gayle Farman

The growing importance of Health Information Technology (HIT) to home care has become undeniable. Home telehealth is the most obvious example of a technology that has already impacted home care and will continue to increase in importance. HIT includes a wide range of electronic or computerized tools that can be used in the delivery and administration of health care services. Common types of HIT include Electronic Medical or Health Records (EMR/HER), Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE) and E—Prescribing. Health Information Exchange (HIE) projects including Regional Health Information Organizations (RHIOs) enable providers to access and share patient information electronically from a variety of sources in order to support the delivery of patient care.

HIT is a rapidly growing industry fueled by New York State efforts to align with the national movement to promote the use of HIT as part of an overall strategy to improve quality and control costs. This national movement was initially stimulated by the widely publicized Institute of Medicine (IOM) reports on patient safety and quality improvement calling for fundamental reforms that will require widespread use of HIT. Multiple Federal agencies are also undertaking initiatives to support health information exchange and health IT adoption. Together, the Agency for Health Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) are funding community-based health IT projects in 43 states.

While states are leading the development of health IT policy, communities are also shaping the emerging health IT landscape through Regional Health Information Organizations (RHIOs) to enable interoperability, quality measurement and reporting and population health improvement initiatives. RHIOs are providing real-world laboratories for analyzing the technology, governance, clinical, business and legal issues raised by interoperable health information exchange and health IT adoption. There are 20 RHIOs that are part of the statewide committee convened by the New York eHealth Collaborative and additional RHIOs are emerging.

HEAL NY
OHITT
HIT
EMR/HER
CIS
RHIO
EHR
HIE
CPOE
IOM
AHRQ
HRSA
NYeC
SHIN-NY

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In 2004-05, the Health Care Efficiency and Affordability Law for New Yorkers Capital Grant Program (the HEAL NY Program) was established to invest up to an anticipated \$1 billion over a four year period to reform and effectively reconfigure New York's health care delivery system to achieve improvements in patient care and increased efficiency of operation. Multiple Requests for Grant Applications have been issued and to date more than \$300 million in awards have been made.

This past August, a new Office of Health Information Technology Transformation (OHITT) was established by the New York State Department of Health (DOH) to coordinate health IT programs and policies across the public and private health care sectors. DOH has set initial activities as follows:

Strategic health IT implementation plan. The plan, to be updated regularly, will include key clinical, patient, technical, organizational, financial and policy components required to advance statewide interoperable health IT.

Health IT coordinating council. The council will bring together internal DOH programs and policies involving health IT to align strategies, avoid duplication and streamline programs.

The health IT public-private partnership. The partnership will help DOH collaborate with public and

private health care leaders on health IT. DOH has asked the New York eHealth Collaborative (NYeC), based in New York City, to coordinate this effort. On October 5, a new \$2.8 million contract from HHS was awarded to the New York eHealth Collaborative to fund the collaboration of two regional health networks.

As part of the Spitzer Administration's commitment, the HEAL NY Phase 5 Health IT Grant Program was announced in September. Totaling \$105.75 million, this funding invests in health IT tools to allow portability of patients' medical records and new tools to assess and target improvements in health care quality.

The strategic focus of the HEAL NY Phase 5 Health IT RGA is to advance interoperability through the funding of a health information infrastructure based on a community driven model *open to all providers, payers and patients.*

Grants will support a coordinated statewide health IT framework. Grants will be made in three categories:

Develop and implement a Statewide Health Information Network for New York (SHIN-NY). This is a network of networks to interconnect clinicians to exchange patient information regardless of the venue where the patient receives care.

Pilot implementation of Clinical Informatics

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The study titled **Depression in Older Home Health-Patients** is entering it's final quarter. CHC would like to recognize HCP member agencies and staff who are making great strides in increasing access to evidence-based care.

Thank you!

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The study is a collaborative effort with the Cornell Homecare Research Partnership and is funded by the NYS Health Foundation. For more information, please go to www.chcforum.org



CHC can be your key to worker education



HC and its affiliate, HCP, are supporting National Home Care Month in November by ramping up HCP's public awareness campaign, "Home Care, Health Care, Your Care.... *for life.*"SM This theme embodies the value of home care and the unsung heroes, home care workers, who make a difference every day in the lives of their patients:

Home care – Home care helps patients stay in the comfort of their own homes.

Health care – Home care is emerging as the central point in the health care continuum.

Your care – Patients receive individualized in-home care from caring and experienced home care aides, paraprofessionals, nurses and therapists.

for life. Home care services are essential at every stage of life from newborn to elder care.

"Your Care" celebrates the dedication and caring of direct care workers who deliver high quality patient care. Home care workers need education and training to develop and maintain their skills, and CHC was founded as a platform for delivering quality education essential for their success. Agencies that offer continuing education programs invest in their workers, creating an environment where workers are recognized and valued. ("My employer believes in my potential.") Education aids in employee retention. ("I like my job because it provides me with the education to grow my skills.") Caregivers provide a sense of comfort to the patient when they are knowledgeable on a variety of topics and want to continue to learn.

With the start of a new year coming up soon, this may be a good time to take a look at your agency's education plan.

- Do you have an education program in place for your direct care workers?
- Is it time to implement one (or update an existing one)?
- Is there a need to diversify the offerings and do you have a plan to do so?

CHC can help you create, expand or diversify your program by providing many different kinds of educational programs to supplement your own programs.

The Home Care Community Forum is the most diverse and accessible program of all. Offered on a variety of topics at no charge, these 60-minute audio conferences can be used for various levels of training. The newest feature is translation of nine of the most popular programs into Spanish and Russian. A conference is available for a limited time via free download from the CHC website (www.chcforum.org) and can also be purchased on CD.

CHC webinars are also easily incorporated into your educational offerings and allow you to train a group of your employees for the price of one. The webinars are available on CD so you can have them as a permanent resource.

Video streaming technology is yet another way to expand your education program. Through the Home Care Information Network (HCIN), CHC provides training on a wide variety of home care topics, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from anywhere you have an Internet connection. Video seminars such as CHC's Paraprofessional Safety Series are affordably priced and made available to you for a year at a time. CHC also has video streamed programs available at no charge such as the Emergency Preparedness Training programs funded by a grant from the New York State Department of Health and the Health Resource Service Administration.

CHC is continually adding to its roster of programs and the new year will be no different with a full slate of new and pertinent topics planned in addition to Home Care Management Institute and the HCP Annual Management Conference & Exhibition. In 2008, the Annual Conference will include a Private Pay track replacing the previously separate Private Pay Conference.

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Upcoming educational events

PPS ICD-9-CM Code Updates

December 6, 2007

11 am - 12:30 pm

Audio conference presented by Patricia Tulloch of RBC Limited.

Lies, Damn Lies and Financial Statements

January 17, 2008

11 am 12:30 pm

Webinar presented by Dexter Braff of The Braff Group.

Forum #35: Why Staying Healthy Matters for Home Care Workers

January 24, 2008

3 pm to 4 pm

Audio conference presented by Harry Dunsker of Nutrition and Fitness for a Healthy New York

To register for an event, visit www.chcforum.org/seminars or call 518/463-1167, ext. 817.



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Services (CIS), community-based health IT tools that aggregate, analyze, measure, and report data in a standardized manner, available to all payers, providers and public health officials.

Pilot implementation of community-wide interoperable Electronic Health Records (EHR), with the majority of this grant's funds being marked for ambulatory physician office-based EHR implementation.

Opportunities for home care



As a critical part of the health care continuum, home care will need to begin integrating HIT into its operations. The costs are high but grants will provide opportunities to acquire funding and to be fully involved and up to date on all the exciting things happening. CHC recommends the following initial outreach steps:

Visit the New York eHealth Collaborative website (www.nyehealth.org). NYeC is will serve as a focal point for health care stakeholders.

Review existing HEAL NY projects. Review the HEAL-NY awards (www.nyehealth.org/heal-Awardee-summaries) to date to become more informed about the partnerships that have been formed and projects funded.

Network with RHIOs. Review the list of RHIOs and reach out to discuss ways in which your existing home care HIT or telemedicine projects can be incorporated. For a current list of RHIOs and their contact information please go to www.chcforum.org/pdf/rhio.pdf.

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