

HEALTH IT INFORMATION RESOURCES SHEET

Medicare Health Care Quality Demonstration Program (MHCQ / MMA 646)

Using Health Information Technology to Achieve Demonstration's Goals

The MHCQ demonstration will enable CMS to support major system changes to achieve effective, safe, and patient-centered care. CMS expects a significant component of major system redesign (improvements in clinical and non-clinical processes and structures within systems and organizations) will be the adoption and use of health information technology (health IT) within practice settings and the promotion of clinical data exchange across and among practices within a community. The infrastructure necessary for seamless and secure clinical data exchange will be informed by the design and implementation of prototypes for a national health information network funded by the Office of the National Coordinator in FY2006.

CMS would like to encourage collaboration among health care providers and other health care organizations that could lead to earlier and more significant measurable impacts on quality and costs of care. Health IT initiatives underway today often involve multiple and diversified sets of stakeholders with distinct yet congruent interests that ultimately aim to improve health care through more efficient and effective practices.

Below is information on health IT activities that entities applying for MHCQ may find useful in considering how to incorporate HIT and clinical data exchange into a system redesign to achieve the goals of the demonstration: improving patient safety, enhancing quality, increasing efficiency, and reducing scientific uncertainty and the unwarranted variation in medical practice that results in both lower quality and higher costs.

HHS Health IT Contracts & Grants

- **[Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's \(AHRQ\)](#)**: AHRQ created the **[National Resource Center for Health Information Technology](#)** to help providers prepare and incorporate new health IT applications into everyday practice. As the central repository for the research findings from HIT projects, the National Resource Center provides direct technical assistance and consulting services to AHRQ projects involved in developing, testing, and using health IT applications, with a particular focus on addressing challenges to health IT implementation in rural and small community settings.

AHRQ's initiative on health IT includes \$166 million in grants and contracts in 41 states to support and stimulate investment in health IT, especially in rural and underserved areas.

- \$22.3 million in health IT implementation awarded to 16 grantees ([Press Release](#) – 10/6/05)
- \$4.7 million awarded to build a statewide health information system in Delaware ([Delaware News Journal Online](#) – 10/4/05)

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- \$139 million in grants and contracts awarded to promote the use of health IT ([Press Release](#) – 10/13/04)
- **Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC)**: ONC has been tasked with leading the development and nationwide implementation of an interoperable health IT infrastructure through a public/private sector approach.

ONC issued a request for proposals for the **development of nationwide health information network (NHIN) architectures**. The purpose of this contract is to develop and evaluate prototypes for a NHIN architecture maximizing the use of existing resources such as the Internet to achieve widespread interoperability among health care software applications, particularly electronic health records (EHRs). Another key objective is to spur technical innovation for nationwide sharing of health information. Up to six contracts will be awarded in November.

- [Request for Proposals](#)
- **Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)**: HRSA's **Office for the Advancement for Telehealth (OAT)** awarded grant monies to **the Foundation for eHealth Initiative** under the **Connecting Communities for Better Health** initiative, a joint, nationwide initiative, headed by RWJF and the Markle Foundation, aimed at addressing interconnectedness of health care issues. See below.

Non-Federal Resources and Grantmakers

- **The eHealth Initiative/Foundation for eHealth Initiative (eHI)**: Two associated non-profit entities that focus on engaging health care stakeholders across the health care spectrum to improve health care through the use of health IT. While funds awarded in 2004 and those available for 2005 have come from HRSA, eHI expects the Connecting Communities for Better Health initiative will grow and the funding base will become more diversified to include private, public, and philanthropic contributions.

Funding

- The Foundation for eHealth Initiative recently released its call for proposals in conjunction with its cooperative agreement with HRSA/OAT and the Connecting Communities for Better Health initiative. This year the program will focus on improving the health and health care of Americans by stimulating the creation of sustainable health information exchange capabilities across the U.S.

The grants will support the funding and technical support of a set of learning laboratories led by multi-stakeholder collaboratives engaged in health information exchange. The multi-stakeholder collaborative efforts who responded to this year's Second Annual Survey of State, Regional and Community-Based Initiatives are eligible for these awards. Proposals

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from eligible communities are due November 7, 2005. A copy of the proposal can be found [here](#).

- \$2 million dollars awarded to nine communities to advance local electronic health information exchange ([Funded Communities](#) – 7/21/04)

Resources

- Report on health information exchange (HIE) efforts can be found [here](#).
 - A webpage with federal and non-federal funding resources can be found [here](#).
 - List of state-based legislative activities can be found [here](#).
- **[Robert Wood Johnson Foundation \(RWJF\)](#)**: Among RWJF’s grantmaking portfolio areas is “[Quality Health Care](#).” Included in this are grants aimed at improving care through the use of health IT.
 - **[University of Maryland’s Robert H. Smith School of Business, Center for Health Information and Decision Systems \(CHIDS\)](#)**: CHIDS has compiled information on [AHRQ HIT Grant Awardees](#), [CMS/CCIP Pilot Programs](#), [Regional Health Information Organizations \(RHIO\)](#), [Health Information Exchanges \(HIE\)](#), private HIT Initiatives, [Bridges-to-Excellence](#), and [QIO/DOQ-IT](#). CHIDS has created a [digital map](#) representing these initiatives. Please contact the CHIDS at 301-405-0702 for more information on how to gain access to full project descriptions.