

PRESS RELEASE

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New Chronic Disease Program Supports Value-Driven Healthcare By Aligning Physicians, Payers, Others

Indiana Health Information Exchange's Quality Health First® program curbs burden of chronic diseases; available to physicians at no cost.

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana (November 19, 2008) – The Indiana Health Information Exchange (IHIE) continues to transform the healthcare industry with realistic solutions to help improve quality and lower costs. The latest example of IHIE's leadership is the launch of its Quality Health First (QHF) program (www.qualityhealthfirst.org), which helps physicians and patients achieve better health outcomes.

The QHF program is a chronic disease and preventive health service that is designed to simplify how physicians and quality managers gather and organize clinical data. It provides them with an actionable, multi-payer report containing up-to-date clinical information from multiple, unconnected sources along with claims information to help improve their patients' health and care management.

"The Indiana Health Information Exchange is committed to providing services that improve healthcare quality while saving time, money and effort to increase healthcare efficiencies," said Dr. J. Marc Overhage, President and CEO of the Indiana Health Information Exchange.

He continued, "The Quality Health First program represents a profound leap into the future of healthcare. We are able to offer a practical tool that can turn silos of information that are scattered across an entire region into meaningful, patient-specific care information to address patients' most common and basic healthcare needs. This program will make a difference in the health and well-being of patients."

The goal of the QHF program is that patients will experience fewer health complications and physicians will see better adherence to evidence-based medical practices and will have more satisfaction with healthier patients. Employers will have a more productive and healthier workforce while payers will see a reduction in healthcare costs.

Specifically, the QHF program:

- Provides doctors with reminders for patients who need preventive health screenings such as colonoscopies and mammograms.
- Highlights patients who require follow-up care to manage chronic diseases like diabetes, asthma and high cholesterol.

- Includes disease-based summaries based on the physician's patient population and comparisons to the physician community as a whole.

The program is currently available to all primary care physicians in the nine county Indianapolis metropolitan area. Seven-hundred physicians, comprised mainly from the area's large hospital physician groups, are already participating in the QHF program. However, the program is available to all primary care physicians in the Indianapolis metropolitan area at no cost. IHIE is actively working to increase physician participation. The program is available to paper-based or electronic-based physician offices.

A 2003 study by the Markle Foundation's Connecting for Health initiative found pertinent patient data was unavailable in 81% of cases at an outpatient clinic.

Further, a recent University of Missouri study showed that generalist physicians represent one third of the U.S. physician workforce and are responsible for more than half of all patient visits at doctors' offices.

"Primary care physicians have more pressure to see more patients in less time," added Dr. Timothy L. Hobbs, CEO of Community Physicians of Indiana, a group of 178 physicians which is participating in the QHF program. "Increasingly, these patients have complex health histories, with one or more chronic diseases. The key to this program is that the information follows the patient, providing a much more accurate view of patients' health and wellness needs."

The office of Dr. John Ralph Collip, a physician located Morristown, Indiana, has been using the QHF program reports in his practice.

"As a single provider practice, I see the value in the Quality Health First program reports," said Dr. Collip. "I review a one-page report which alerts me to any health screenings or tests that are needed for that particular patient. It saves me time and enables me to be more proactive so that I can provide even better care to my patients."

As an added benefit to participants of the QHF program, IHIE was selected by the Health & Human Services Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) as a Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI) registry.

Physicians who participate in the PQRI program voluntarily collect and report their practice data in relation to a set of performance measures. As an approved registry, IHIE is able to offer this service to physicians at no cost for a select group of measures that are included in both the QHF and PQRI programs.

The QHF program was conceived by the Employers' Forum of Indiana, and is run by IHIE. Other participants in the development of the program include physicians, public and private payers, hospitals, academic institutions, and local and state health departments. The Fairbanks Foundation and Regenstrief Foundation provided grants of \$2 million and \$1.7 million, respectively, to help support the rollout and ongoing development of the program.

The Quality Health First program is made possible through IHIE's partnership with the Regenstrief Institute, Inc. which runs the nation's most advanced and secure community health record system. This groundbreaking system, called the Indiana Network for Patient Care (INPC), powers the data used in the QHF program reports. The INPC contains over 1.5 billion pieces of clinical data.

The INPC was launched in 1994 with funding from the National Institutes of Health and the National Library of Medicine. The INPC has elevated Indiana's reputation as a national leader in health information technology and is the foundation for Regenstrief's recognition by the RAND Corporation in 2006 as the source of nearly one-fourth of the high quality evidence on the impact of information technology on the quality of healthcare.

The Quality Health First program also plays a significant role in Regenstrief's participation in the National Health Information Network quality use case demonstrations later this year, as it has the potential to be replicated throughout the U.S.

Next year, IHIE plans to expand the QHF program to other Indiana primary care physicians practicing beyond the Indianapolis metropolitan area. It will also be offered to specialties, including cardiology and orthopedics.

About the Indiana Health Information Exchange

Indiana Health Information Exchange, Inc. (IHIE) is a non-profit corporation formed by the Regenstrief Institute, private hospitals, local and state health departments, BioCrossroads and other prominent organizations in Indiana. IHIE is one of the nation's only health information exchange organizations providing chronic disease and preventive health services. It is dedicated to supporting communities by providing services that enable the right medical information to get to the right provider at the right time to enhance patient care. To learn more, visit www.ihie.com.

About Regenstrief Institute, Inc.

The Regenstrief Institute, Inc., an internationally recognized informatics and healthcare research organization, is dedicated to the improvement of health through research that enhances the quality and cost-effectiveness of health care. Established in Indianapolis by philanthropist Sam Regenstrief in 1969 on the campus of the Indiana University School of Medicine, the Institute is supported by the Regenstrief Foundation and closely affiliated with the I.U. School of Medicine and the Health and Hospital Corporation of Marion County, Indiana. Regenstrief Institute research scientists form a highly respected cadre of health services researchers linked to one of the largest and most comprehensive medical informatics laboratories in the world. www.regenstrief.org

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