



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Bob Johannessen
Corporate Director of Communications
225.248.7059
bjohannessen@eqhs.org

Mississippi Providers Leading the Country in Electronic Health Record Adoption

Baton Rouge, LA – More than 1,000 primary care physicians in Mississippi have successfully updated their practices by implementing an electronic health record, or EHR. According to an official with the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, this makes Mississippi one of the first states to reach its goal for EHR adoption.

Two years ago, the federal government established EHR adoption goals for all states, and established organizations known as regional extension centers, called REC, to lead the effort. In Mississippi, the REC is run by eQHealth Solutions. The targets for EHR adoption are different in each state, depending on the size of the state and the number of physicians and other primary care providers. The goal established for Mississippi is 1,000 primary care providers.

In an on-site visit this summer, Fadesola Adetosoye, project officer for the Office of the National Coordinator, recognized the Mississippi REC for its achievement.

“We have charged our nation’s 62 regional extension centers with providing the technical assistance, training and support to providers who are serious about improving care by adding an electronic health record to their practice,” Adetosoye said. “Today, the Mississippi REC has become the second in the country to meet its goal of assisting 100 percent of its targeted providers.”

The Mississippi REC was also the third state to reach the first EHR milestone of providers making the commitment to update their practices with this technology.

A key to the Mississippi REC’s success has been the relationships established with other organizations that are committed to the EHR movement. These organizations include the Mississippi Division of Medicaid, the Delta Blues Beacon Community program, the Mississippi Health Information Network, the quality improvement organization (QIO) and many provider organizations and associations.

Patsy Collins, CEO of Mantachie Rural Health Care Inc., also praised the relationship they have formed with eQHealth Solutions.

“As a result of the direct guidance the staff of the REC has provided us, we will successfully be meeting all meaningful use criteria within the next few months. The commitment to helping a Federally Qualified Health Center take the steps to improve our health technology shows the REC is focused on improving health care on a larger scale,” said Collins.

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MS REC a National Leader Add one

Randy Bordelon, program manager for the REC, said it is notable that a poor, rural state like Mississippi could emerge as a national leader in this health care initiative. He credited the broad support from stakeholder organizations as the key to this success.

Bordelon said the next step for the REC is to assist providers to use their EHRs in conjunction with standards set by the federal government. This step is often referred to as *meaningful use* of the EHR.

“Helping providers achieve meaningful use will be the next challenge,” he said. “I am confident the doctors and other primary care providers in Mississippi will continue their commitment to using this technology in a way that improves patient care.”

Practices that meet this initial meaningful use goal will qualify for incentive payments from the Mississippi Medicaid program and/or the federal Medicare program. These incentive payments are designed to offset a portion of the cost to purchase and implement the EHR systems.

For more information about achieving meaningful use, contact the Mississippi REC at 225-926-6353 or email at rbordelon@eqhs.org.

About Mississippi REC

The REC contract was awarded through an objective review process by the Department of Health and Human Services, ONC, as the designated organization in Mississippi to support primary health care providers on EHR adoption and meaningful use. To learn more about EHR adoption, meaningful use and other areas of health IT, visit www.healthit.gov.

About eQHealth Solutions

Health care payers and providers rely on our expertise and medical management products to improve health care and create operational and financial efficiencies. Founded in 1986, we are headquartered in Baton Rouge, LA and have offices in Illinois, Mississippi and Florida. Through our partnerships with Medicare, state Medicaid agencies and commercial payers, eQHealth touches the lives of more than six million people annually. To learn more about eQHealth's services visit www.eqhealthsolutions.org.

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