

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Bob Johannessen

Director of Communications

225.248-7059

bjohannessen@eqhs.org

Mississippi REC Shares Meaningful Use Knowledge at Health Information Technology Technical Assistance Workshop

Baton Rouge – Health care providers that effectively use an electronic health record (EHR) can become eligible to receive incentive payments from Medicare or Medicaid. This level of EHR utilization pertaining to federal standards is known as meaningful use, and some providers are still working to achieve this standard.

To assist, a workshop was held earlier this month in Raymond, Mississippi at Hinds Community College. The event was organized by the Mississippi Regional Extension Center, the Delta Regional Authority and the federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Kathleen Keeley, regional lead consultant for the Mississippi Regional Extension Center (REC), gave an overview of meaningful use and how the extension centers can support providers. The presentation, Meaningful Use 101, was an overview of Stage 1 Meaningful Use and the Electronic Health Record Incentives Program established under the HITECH ACT of 2009. The program offers federal incentive payments to providers and hospitals who adopt EHRs.

“Using EHRs in meaningful ways has the potential to improve quality, safety, efficiency and outcomes for patients and families. Regional Extension Centers were established to educate and give technical support to primary care providers in adopting EHRs,” said Keeley.

“We place special emphasis on assisting providers who predominately serve uninsured, under-insured and medically underserved populations. I was pleased to participate in the workshop because of our common interest in development of HIT in the Delta region. The event also emphasized the need for workforce training to meet the needs of providers moving forward with EHR adoption,” said Keeley.

Dr. Margaret Gray, the President and Chief Executive Officer of Family Health Care Clinic, also participated in a panel discussion on Health IT. Family Health Care Clinic is a Federally



Left to Right: Chris Williams (REC Regional Team Leader), Sherry Wallace (REC Regional Team Leader), Randy Bordelon (REC Program Manager), Dr. Margaret Gray (CEO of Family Health Care Clinic), Mat Kendall (Director of OPAS), Kathleen Keeley (REC Regional Lead Leader)



Qualified Health Center that is currently being assisted by the REC in the meaningful use process.

The moderator for the event was Mat Kendall, Director of the Office of Provider Adoption Support, a division of the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC). Kendall requested assistance from the REC to present at the event. “No one understands health IT needs better than the REC team, so I wanted to leverage that expertise,” he said.

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 HHS/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.

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