



News for Immediate Release

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Health Care Providers Now Have Until Oct. 31 to get Free Year of DIRECT Messaging

Harrisburg – The Pennsylvania eHealth Collaborative has extended the deadline to Oct. 31 for doctors and other healthcare providers to sign up for one free year of DIRECT messaging service from an approved health information service provider.

DIRECT is a simple, secure and standards-based method to encourage electronic exchange of health information among health care providers. It can be used to transmit patient care records, referrals, discharge summaries and other clinical documents. Both the sender and recipient must be subscribers.

“Today’s healthcare consumers expect their doctors to take advantage of technology – both in and out of the exam room. Health information exchange, or HIE, can increase efficiency, improve quality and safety of care, reduce costs and make care more convenient for patients,” said Robert Torres, Health Information Technology Coordinator for the state. “DIRECT messaging is an easier and faster alternative to using fax machines and the mail.”

As many as 8,000 providers could potentially take advantage of the grant program. This includes hospitals and health systems, community clinics, doctors and other licensed providers, pharmacies and independent laboratories.

HIE is the electronic movement of health-related information among unaffiliated organizations according to nationally recognized standards. Pennsylvania was awarded \$17.1 million under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to help establish a health information exchange.

The PA eHealth Collaborative is working to meet federal requirements and enable the use of information technology to advance HIE, which has been shown to improve healthcare quality and efficiency, ensure patient safety and provide secure, confidential access to health information for making the best possible health decisions.

For more information, including a list of certified DIRECT providers, visit the PA eHealth Collaborative website at www.paehealthcollab.com.

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