

Iowa e-Health Connection

A monthly e-newsletter on the progress of health information technology and the health information exchange in Iowa



A collaboration to provide better information for better care.

Executive Director Update

Welcome back to another edition of the *Iowa e-Health Connection*. With the legislative session winding down, this year's legislative activity for e-Health will be wrapping up as well. Nevertheless, the work goes on to develop policies and procedures for Iowa e-Health, such as Administrative Rules and Iowa HIE participation agreements. We've also been working very hard on the Financial Sustainability Plan, which will guide how the Iowa HIE is funded. This effort, which is nearing completion with a final review by the Executive Committee coming in June, could not have been done without the dedication of our stakeholders. On the national front, the [Health IT Policy Committee](#) is considering recommending alternative time frames for Stage 2 Meaningful Use. One option would decrease the Meaningful Use requirement to a 90-day demonstration period rather than one full year. Another option would postpone the start of Stage 2 for one year (beginning Oct. 1, 2012 rather than Oct. 1, 2013). Both options indicate the policy committee is hearing that it will take some time for health care providers and EHR vendors to meet these enhanced requirements. Lastly, we want to hear from you! Please send us your health IT success stories. We want to hear how health IT is being used to improve the quality, safety and efficiency of health care in Iowa!

-- Kim Norby, Iowa e-Health Executive Director

Calendar

- [MAY 19](#) – Iowa HIMSS Meeting
- [JUNE 8-9](#) – Iowa Immunization Conference
- [JUNE 24](#) – Executive Committee and Advisory Council Meeting
- [AUGUST 11-12](#) – Iowa e-Health Summit

Webinars

- [Attend an upcoming webinar](#) – Hosted by the Iowa Regional Extension Center



Iowa Hospital Reduces Risk, Costs with Health Information Technology

Mercy Medical Center of North Iowa has turned to health information technology to help contain costs and improve patient care. It's working. Randy Haskins, director of information services, says Mercy North Iowa has completed six of seven stages of electronic health record use. It is among the first hospitals in Iowa to reach the milestone. "A lot of the technologies that we've implemented have saved us costs over the long run, primarily in staff time," Haskins says. "Our staff resources have been reallocated to different areas where we've had needs that we had not been able to address."

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Iowa Providers Can Register and Apply for EHR Incentives

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is accepting registrations and applications for health care providers to apply for Electronic Health Record (EHR) incentive payments. Eligible professionals and hospitals may qualify for the incentives when they adopt EHR technology and successfully demonstrate "meaningful use" of the technology in ways that improve the quality, safety and effectiveness of patient-centered care. Iowa's Medicaid program launched January 3, 2011 and has already paid out over \$2.3 million to eligible providers and hospitals. CMS offers Iowa providers more information to register for the incentives.

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New ONC National Coordinator Appointed

On April 8th, Farzad Mostashari, MD, was appointed National Coordinator for Health Information Technology. Dr. Mostashari replaces Dr. David Blumenthal, for whom he served as deputy since July 2009.

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Don't miss the 2011 Iowa e-Health Summit!

This year's Iowa e-Health Summit is bigger and better than ever! The 7th Annual Summit will be held August 11 and 12, 2011 at the Meadows Events and Conference Center in Altoona, Iowa. The new two-day format includes a day one focus on meaningful use of electronic health records and a day two focus on health information exchange. This exciting event is a combined effort of the IFMC Health Information Technology Regional Extension Center, Iowa Medicaid Enterprise and the Iowa Department of Public Health. The Summit will feature keynote speakers from the Office of the National Coordinator and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, breakout sessions, demonstrations, case studies, and more. You don't want to miss this opportunity to learn the latest on health IT in Iowa so mark your calendar NOW! Look for more information to be shared in the near future on the HITREC website at www.iowahitrec.org/events.