

QUARTERLY COVERAGE

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Letter from the Chairman

As physicians, we face the reality that Health Information Technology is changing the practice of medicine. This evolution has dramatically impacted both our daily habits and our ability to access the information we use each and every day. This edition of our newsletter includes an overview of a few resources available to you in evaluating your options as you continue to integrate technology into your practice.

The articles in this newsletter focus on two relevant initiatives in our state. The West Virginia Regional Health Information Technology Extension Center (WVRHITEC), a collaborative effort providing resources to physicians in the evaluation of Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems. And, the West Virginia Health Information Network (WVHIN), which is working to launch a Health Information Exchange which will ultimately create a secure system for the exchange of patient data among physicians, hospitals and diagnostic labs. These organizations are working to integrate technology and build bridges between the various entities that make up the healthcare delivery system.

Another relevant topic for discussion is the term "meaningful use." Beginning in 2011, eligible Medicare and Medicaid providers who successfully implement electronic health records (EHRs) and achieve "meaningful use," as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, may receive reimbursement payments for their EHR systems. As these standards continue to develop, providers that reach the meaningful use criteria may qualify to receive federal financial incentives for using EHRs.

The Mutual strives to be a resource to assist with questions you may have whether it be HIPAA or Health Information Technology. As Chairman, I thank you for your continued support of your Mutual as we continue to deliver not only a stable source for your medical professional liability insurance, but also, the advocacy and support you need and deserve as we all work together to provide the best possible care for our patients.

We are Physicians Insuring Physicians.

Sincerely,

R. Austin Wallace, M.D.

New HIT Extension Center Available To Assist With Electronic Health Records, EHR Incentives

by Roger Chaufournier

Watch a free archived Webinar on selecting a practice management system from the American Medical Association and the Medical Group Management Association at: www.ama-assn.org/go/pmssoftware

Achievement Statistics

The following are a few numbers from underwriting:

Total Number of Policyholders Covered: **1,521**

Year-to-Date:

Number of New Policyholders Written: **86**

Number of Policyholders Renewed: **1,190**

Statistics as of October 1, 2010

Over the next few years West Virginia's health care industry will have a unique opportunity to transform itself through greater adoption of electronic health information technology. The driver of this transformation will be millions of dollars of federal funds that will provide incentive payments for those eligible hospitals and primary care providers who adopt certified electronic health record (EHR) systems.

As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) have been authorized to provide a reimbursement incentive for eligible Medicare and Medicaid providers (physician and hospital providers) who are successful in implementing certified electronic health records and achieving "meaningful use."

What is "meaningful use?"

This is the term being used by the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) to describe the criteria eligible providers must meet to qualify to receive federal financial incentives for using electronic health records (EHRs) in a meaningful manner.

The meaningful use criteria will involve three stages. Stage One criteria have been finalized, and for providers the proposed criteria include certain objectives (core and menu), each of which has a corresponding measure. These initial objectives address such topics as:

- Capturing health information electronically in a coded format
- Using that information to track key clinical conditions
- Communicating that information in order to help coordinate care
- Initiating the reporting of clinical quality measures and public health information

The policy goals of meaningful use will be most fully realized by building on findings from Stage 1 and by making full use of the greater proliferation of certified EHR technology. CMS intends to propose, through future rulemaking, two additional stages of the criteria for meaningful use.

To further assist with implementation of electronic health record systems and to aid providers in getting ready for these federal EHR incentive payments, the ARRA act also provided funding to establish Health



Information Technology resource centers across the United States. Here in West Virginia, this new center is the West Virginia Regional Health Information Technology Extension Center (WVRHITEC).

The WVRHITEC is designed to serve as a statewide resource center to aid primary care providers in implementing and using certified health information technology and achieving health improvement outcomes through "meaningful use." The WVRHITEC involves a collaboration of several state organizations focused on improving health care quality and access. Key partners are the West Virginia Health Improvement Institute, the West Virginia Medical Institute and the Community Health Network of West Virginia.

For more information regarding the West Virginia Regional Health Information Technology Extension Center, membership fees and federal stimulus payments, please visit www.wvrhitec.org or request information by calling (877) 775-7535.

Roger Chaufournier is Chairman of the West Virginia Health Improvement Institute and the Program Officer for the West Virginia Regional Health Information Technology Extension Center.

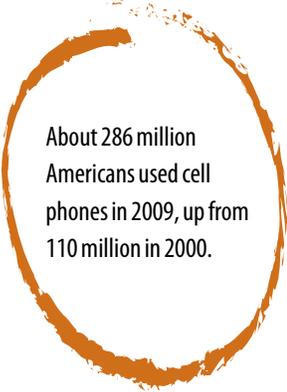
WVHIN Moves Closer to Launching Pilot

The West Virginia Health Information Network (WVHIN) is a public/private partnership created in 2006. The WVHIN is charged with building a secure electronic health information system for the exchange of patient data among physicians, hospitals, diagnostic laboratories and other care providers.

Critically important patient data is often fragmented and residing in silos that do not communicate with each other throughout the healthcare delivery system. The WVHIN's Health Information Exchange (HIE) will connect providers and others electronically to enable clinical information and administrative data to be shared between organizations.

Currently, the West Virginia Health Information Network (WVHIN) is in the final stages of selecting a Health Information Exchange (HIE) technology vendor. The review and scoring process started in March of 2010. A review committee made up of approximately 40 stakeholder organizations from across the state extensively reviewed responses from 10 vendor groups that met all of the RFP requirements. The next steps for the WVHIN will be an initial pilot of the exchange in the Wheeling medical referral region in early 2011.

For more information, visit www.wvhin.com or call (304) 558-4503.



About 286 million Americans used cell phones in 2009, up from 110 million in 2000.

Physicians Recognized for Excellence and Service

The West Virginia Medical Foundation announced the inaugural recipients of the Foundation's *Excellence in Medicine Awards* during the West Virginia State Medical Association's Healthcare Summit on Friday, August 27.

This year's recipients are:

Robert J. Marshall, M.D. of Huntington
The Excellence in Medicine for a Lifetime of Distinguished Service

This award recognizes a physician who throughout their career has exemplified the medical profession's highest values — commitment to service, community involvement, altruism and leadership.

James L. Comerchi, M.D. of Wheeling
The Excellence in Medicine Award for Enhancing Access to Quality Healthcare

This award recognizes a physician who has demonstrated extraordinary interest and effort toward improving access to healthcare or reducing healthcare disparities in West Virginia.

Wayne C. Spiggle, M.D. of Short Gap
The Excellence in Medicine for Leadership in Public Health

This award recognizes a physician who has made a difference in creating and nurturing a caring health promotion and disease prevention environment.

Future recipients of these awards will be members of the West Virginia State Medical Association who help the Foundation fulfill its mission.

Robert L. Ghiz, M.D. of Charleston was also recognized for his outstanding service to the West Virginia physician community as founding Chairman of the Board of the West Virginia Mutual Insurance Company and his leadership role in the medical community throughout his career.

Dr. Ghiz received the inaugural Robert L. Ghiz Award for Outstanding Service to the Physician Community of West Virginia.

Future recipients of this award will be physicians who throughout their career have dedicated themselves to altruistic service, leadership and advocacy of the physician community of West Virginia.



Physicians are seeing an increasing number of tech-related health concerns, such as BlackBerry thumb, hearing loss and cell phone elbow, as dependence on electronic devices reaches unprecedented levels.



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DHHR Launches Medicaid ePrescribing

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources has launched WVeScript, its free ePrescribing initiative for medical prescribers enrolled with West Virginia Medicaid across the state. ePrescribing training and information regarding health information technology initiatives, laws and incentives can be accessed at www.WVeScript.com.

Medicaid enrolled providers can use WVeScript for all their patients, not just Medicaid members. Monetary assistance and two continuing medical education credits for completion of the ePrescribing courseware are available for a limited number of enrolled primary care providers to enable them to begin ePrescribing.

The ePrescribing tool is available through the Medicaid clinical web portal, MediWeb. Physicians can easily access the portal by logging on with their assigned user ID and password. MediWeb also contains claims-based pharmacy and medical histories of Medicaid members and forms for submitting electronic prior authorization requests to the Rational Drug Therapy Program.

Contact the DHHR to learn more about ePrescribing at 304-558-7309 or DHHRMedicaideScript@wv.gov