



ONC Recognizes New Mexico as First State to Successfully Obtain HIE Implementation Funds

May 21, 2010

Federal Funds and MedPlus Centergy Solution Accelerate New Mexico Health Information Collaborative's (NMHIC) Plan to Serve Two Million Patients Statewide

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M., May 21, 2010 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ --New Mexico is the first state to meet all requirements for strategic and operational planning as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) state health information exchange (HIE) cooperative agreement program, according to the United States Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC). While numerous states have secured ARRA planning funding, New Mexico is the first and only state to have executed on its plan to meet ONC criteria and receive approval for implementation funds.

The \$7 million ARRA grant allows the New Mexico Health Information Collaborative (NMHIC) to accelerate its plan to serve two million patients statewide, with a network largely powered by Centergy Data Exchange Services from MedPlus, the healthcare information technology subsidiary of Quest Diagnostics Incorporated (NYSE: DGX).

Today, NMHIC has more than one million unique patients in its Master Person Index, with access to patient record information from more than ten hospitals, two major medical groups, and two major laboratories. As the network expands across the entire state, the number of unique patients to be licensed under Centergy will increase to two million. NMHIC expects to expand the network statewide in phases, with the first phase to launch this month and all phases scheduled for completion by 2013.

"To develop the plan for New Mexico, the NMHIC team went through a rigorous process, evaluating the HIE's strengths and its limitations. We are proud to receive this ONC distinction and the ARRA funding that will allow us to accelerate our plan to connect physicians statewide to a centralized network of critical electronic patient information," said Maggie Gunter, PhD, president of LCF Research, which operates NMHIC. "MedPlus has been an instrumental partner in this endeavor, providing valuable technologies and implementation expertise that are enabling us to meet the needs of our physicians and expand our reach to every patient in the state."

Several leading New Mexico healthcare providers are already participating in the NMHIC project, including Presbyterian Healthcare Services, TriCore Reference Laboratory, Holy Cross Hospital, Lovelace Health System, ABQ Health Partners, SED Labs, CHRISTUS St. Vincent Hospital, and Albuquerque Ambulance. The Centergy Data Exchange Services will facilitate secure, fast, seamless connections to these source data systems, and provide a comprehensive electronic patient record that can be viewed anywhere, anytime by NMHIC partner healthcare providers, who will have access to a centralized network of important information such as lab results, patient record summaries, radiology reports, discharge summaries, medication history and claims data.

"As states work to develop HIEs that will drive better patient outcomes and more efficient health care, each is challenged to answer the needs of its own unique healthcare landscape," according to Richard Mahoney, president of MedPlus and vice president of Healthcare Information Solutions at Quest Diagnostics. "New Mexico has emerged as a leading example in HIE development, as a state that set out to precisely understand and address its healthcare system's strengths and needs. We are honored to be working with the NMHIC team as they achieve this milestone, and we look forward to our continued partnership focused on creating a better healthcare system for the two million patients of New Mexico."

MedPlus also currently supports Nationwide Health Information Network (NHIN) contractors in California and New York as well as some of North America's largest health information exchanges, including the D.C. Patient Data Hub, British Columbia Provincial Laboratory Information System and the New York Clinical Information Exchange (NYCLIX).

Data gaps resulting from inefficient workflow processes present some of the most difficult challenges facing hospitals today. Using Centergy, NMHIC is able to organize the content of health records used for clinical care of patients and help hospitals meet meaningful use criteria.

Supported by a MedPlus mapping solution, NMHIC's universal terminology systems will provide the basis for decision support, help ensure interoperability between hospitals using different systems, enable facilities and departments across New Mexico to receive and send results for comparison and consultation, and contribute to the state's larger public health initiative of improving clinical outcomes and quality of care.

To view a full copy of NMHIC's plan, visit www.NMHIC.org.

About The New Mexico Health Information Collaborative

The New Mexico Health Information Collaborative (NMHIC) is the name of New Mexico's rapidly growing health information exchange (HIE) network, as well as the community collaborative that has supported its development with time and funding. The collaborative includes important New Mexico stakeholders representing the largest health care providers, payers, employers, state agencies and consumers. NMHIC was created in 2004, and continues to be fully staffed and operated by LCF Research. LCF is a non-profit applied health research organization founded in 1990. Additional company information is available at www.lcfresearch.org.

About MedPlus

MedPlus, based in Cincinnati, Ohio, is the healthcare information technology subsidiary of Quest Diagnostics. MedPlus is a leading developer and integrator of clinical connectivity and healthcare information exchange solutions designed to foster better patient care and improve business performance for health care institutions, physicians and patients. The company's Centergy(TM) and ChartMaxx(R) solutions efficiently and securely collect, store, manage and integrate clinical information within an organization, enterprise, practice or community. Centergy enables clinicians to access patient data in a centralized view aggregated from multiple care sites. ChartMaxx, the company's award-winning DMI and electronic patient record system, has been implemented in more than 100 hospitals and integrated health care delivery networks and has more than 300,000 users. For more information, visit www.MedPlus.com.

About Quest Diagnostics

Quest Diagnostics is the world's leading provider of diagnostic testing, information and services that patients and doctors need to make better health care decisions. The company offers the broadest access to diagnostic testing services through its network of laboratories and patient service centers, and provides interpretive consultation through its extensive medical and scientific staff. Quest Diagnostics is a pioneer in developing innovative diagnostic tests and advanced health care information technology solutions that help improve patient care. Additional company information is available at www.QuestDiagnostics.com.

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