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eHealth News from the NITC eHealth Council

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eBHIN, NeHII recognized for consent policies

eBHIN and NeHII have developed an innovative approach to managing consent and authorization for the release of protected health information. The approach conforms with CFR 42 Part 2 requirements for specially protected information, including the requirement that the recipient of the information be named. In the HIE environment with a record locator service, the record could potentially be available to everyone in the network. Utilizing a list of network participants with the release is not practical, because it is invalidated anytime a new member is added and the number of participants could become quite large. In order to meet this requirement, a two-part consent process was developed. In the first treatment setting, the patient consents to allow the information to be sent to the HIE. In the second treatment setting, the patient consents to allow them to go retrieve the record. This allows the participating organization to be named. Participating organizations agree through a participation agreement that records will only be accessed for treatment purposes, and individual users are required to sign a user agreement stating they will abide by these policies. Random audits are performed to assure that inappropriate access is not taking place.

The approach developed by eBHIN and NeHII recently received praise from Dr. Westley Clark of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as a potential breakthrough in the development of methods for sharing specially protected information.

Wide River TEC honors Omaha physicians

Wide River Technology Extension Center is hosting a Meaningful Use Ceremony to honor Mark W. Woodruff, MD; William D. Weeks, MD; Southwest Family Physicians, PC; and Gretna Family Health for being the first Nebraska providers to achieve Meaningful Use of the electronic health record system.

The ceremony will be held on Tuesday, July 19 at 9:00 at Southwest Family Physicians, PC, 8258 Hascall Street, Suite 100, Omaha, Nebraska.

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eBHIN prepares to go live

The Electronic Behavioral Health Information Network (eBHIN) is preparing to go live. Over 170 users at 11 organizations in Southeast Nebraska are now using the data entry workflow templates. This information is the basis of the shared behavioral health patient record which is uploaded to the HIE. The file transfer data upload process with Magellan Behavioral Health is now working smoothly for patient registration with the State Division of Behavioral Health for re-imbursement for authorized services. eBHIN is now preparing to go live with the HIE functionality later this summer. Network participation agreements have been executed among all these organizations which includes requirements for adherence to all policies and procedures.

Additional information about eBHIN can be found at their new website (www.ebhin.org).

NeHII continues to expand

NeHII has experienced a significant increase in participation during the past quarter. Over 1,700 healthcare providers and staff are currently using NeHII, up from 1,396 at the beginning of April. Creighton University Medical Center went live on the exchange in April and implementation planning meetings are occurring with other facilities. Regional West Medical Center in Scottsbluff, NE has committed to a Class B membership to NeHII.

NeHII upgraded the Elysium operating system and platform the week of July 5th and is now on a 64-bit operating system with a new Record Locator Service on a DB2 platform. NeHII has received positive feedback on the improved response time. Migrating to the new operating system was the first of two steps to install the Meaningful Use CCHIT certified EMR application. The second step was installed on the test side on July 14 and should be implemented in production on August 11, which will allow providers using the Elysium EMR product to meet Meaningful Use requirements required by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS).

Phase 1 of the Immunization Gateway is in the final stage of testing. The gateway will send information to NeSIIS, the Nebraska State Immunization Information System, on behalf of physicians who use the eRX NeHII application for the administration of vaccinations and immunizations. The next phase of the project will be to collect immunization and vaccination information from third party EMRs and send the information to NeSIIS via NeHII.

NeHII was one of three HIEs selected to participate in a project to transmit information to the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) using a Nationwide Health Information Network (Nw-HIN) gateway. The CDC will track smoking cessation, low blood pressure, use of aspirin therapy, and diabetes monitoring. The exchange conducted a successful qualifying call on July 5 and the CDC has undertaken a statement of work for NeHII participation in the project. They have also requested a demonstration of the Axolotl Discover Reporting tool to gain a better understanding of the quality analytics functionalities NeHII will be able to offer during the project.

Additional information is available at www.nehii.org.

NeHII hosts annual meeting July 21

The NeHII Annual Meeting, hosted by Great Plains Regional Medical Center, will be held in North Platte, NE at the Sandhills Convention Center on July 21 starting at 2:00 PM. Speakers will include Erica Galvez from the ONC and Robert Scarborough from Axolotl. If you haven't received your invitation, please contact Jkatelman@bass-inc.com.

NeHII identifies pharmacy use cases

Several use cases were readily identified by a pharmacist and a pharmacy tech who were accessing the NeHII Virtual Health Record (VHR) following training. The NeHII users were able to secure necessary information to improve patient care, dispense medical supplies/medications and improve customer service by decreasing the turnaround time for reimbursement processing.

Use Case 1: The pharmacy tech had worked for 20 days without success to secure documentation from the prescribing physician on the need for a walker for this patient. By using the VHR Report tab, the NeHII user was able to locate the chart note stating patient unable to ambulate without use of assisted devices which supported the dispensing of a walker.

Use Case 2: The pharmacist/NeHII user needed docu-

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mentation to support the use of diabetic test strips. By using the VHR Report tab, user was able to secure Discharge Summary documentation which stated the discharge directions for regular and periodic blood sugar testing and supported dispensing diabetic test strips.

Use Case 3: In the file documentation, the primary care provider was not known to the pharmacist. The provider signature on the script was not legible. By accessing the VHR report tab, the pharmacist/user was able to access a report which identified the primary care provider. In addition, the pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) was not disclosed. The user accessed the pharmacy query to determine the PBM. This particular pharmacy was not a preferred provider, but the pharmacist secured information to assist him in managing the prescriptions dispensed with the care provider.

Use Case 4: The pharmacy tech had been working for more than 6 months to determine if a patient's walker was reimbursable by Medicare. To this point, they had not been able to get medical records verifying the medical necessity from the provider. A query was made by the pharmacy tech to the VHR Report tab. In the report tab, the discharge summary note had documentation by the discharging physician that the patient was able to walk around a city block. Although the patient had other medical conditions, there was no documentation to support the walker.

Wide River TEC plans Meaningful Use Summit

Wide River Technology Extension Center is hosting a Meeting Meaningful Use Summit and Vendor Lab on Wednesday, August 24 in Scottsbluff at the John N. Harms Advanced Technology Center, Western Nebraska Community College. More information is available at www.widerivertec.org.

Nebraska SMHP submitted to CMS

DHHS has drafted the State Medicaid Health Information Technology (SMHP) Plan. This planning document describes the implementation of Nebraska's Medicaid EHR Incentive Program. It also includes an assessment of the current levels of EHR and HIE adoption in the State, the goals for future EHR and HIE adoption, and the methods to attain those goals. In addition, provider surveys with eligible professionals (physicians, dentists, nurse midwives, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants) and hospitals were conducted to help assess the current use of HIT in Nebraska, as well as to estimate eligibility and interest in the EHR Incentive Program. The results of the survey are included as appendixes D and E in the proposed SMHP.

DHHS anticipates receiving CMS approval and beginning EHR Incentive program registration in Fall 2011.

In order to provide advance information to providers who are planning to register in the Nebraska Medicaid EHR Incentive Program, the proposed SMHP can be viewed at http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/med/dhhs-smhp.pdf.

Any changes prompted by CMS review will be incorporated in the final SMHP posted when the SMHP is approved by CMS.

ONC project officer to visit July 20-22

Erica Galvez, project officer with the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT, will be conducting a site visit July 20-22 to learn about the progress that Nebraska is making on its State HIE Cooperative Agreement. Through the cooperative agreement, Nebraska is receiving $6.8 million to develop health information exchange throughout Nebraska.

E-Prescribing Work Group will meet July 20

The E-Prescribing Work Group will meet July 20 from 4:00 to 6:00 in Lincoln, 501 South 14th Street, 3rd floor conference room 3A. A phone bridge will also be available. For more information, e-mail anne.byers@nebraska.gov.