



LOUISIANA  
HEALTH CARE  
QUALITY FORUM

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**For Immediate Release**

**MORE THAN 100,000 PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS COMMIT TO ADOPTING ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS**  
**Louisiana Health Information Technology Resource Center Receives 1,072 Commitments**

Nov. 28, 2011 – At the ONC Annual Meeting on Nov. 17, 2011, in Washington, D.C., the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) announced that the network of 62 Health IT Regional Extension Centers (RECs) achieved one of its first major milestones – gaining commitments from more than 100,000 primary care providers (PCPs) to adopt electronic health records in a meaningful way. As part of the network of RECs, the Louisiana Health Information Technology (LHIT) Resource Center has enrolled 1,072 primary care providers in Louisiana to date. Representing roughly one-third of all PCPs in the U.S., these 100,000+ providers are building the foundation of a fully-electronic health care system.

“This is an enormous milestone for America’s health care providers,” said Farzad Mostashari, MD, ScM, national coordinator for health information technology at ONC. “EHR-enabled providers are taking the first steps in transforming health care in the U.S., enhancing the safety and quality of care for patients. We would not have been able to accomplish this without the hard work of regional extension centers across the country.”

Primary care providers are the foundation of America’s health care system as they are often the patient’s first point of contact for health care and can be the center of the patient’s care network. EHR-enabled PCPs allow clinicians to share more accurate, complete information and better coordinate patient care across specialists, hospitals and other health care providers. As EHR technologies become more widely adopted by providers and reach their full potential, patients will be able to access their own health information and become empowered partners in their medical care.

The LHIT Resource Center, administered by the Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum, provides technical assistance, guidance and information to support and accelerate health care providers’ efforts to adopt and meaningfully use EHRs in our state. “Since September 2010, the Resource Center has been assisting PCPs who face unique and complex

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challenges with EHR adoption to make a smooth transition to their EHR goals,” commented Nadine Robin, LHIT Resource Center program manager. “We are involved with the practices and serve as their advocates, forming a team with the providers, nurses and office staff. Everyone is working on the same goal – achieving meaningful use.”

According to Robin, the Resource Center’s clients are excited about the transformation. “They are really grasping the true intent of this evolution and are looking forward to involvement with Louisiana’s health information exchange, which is currently being piloted in the Acadiana region,” she added.

Throughout the country, RECs are working with providers in different practice settings to ensure the widespread adoption of EHRs. They also provide assistance to clinicians working in practices of various sizes and in both urban and rural settings. While RECs mainly assist primary care providers, they also work with specialists such as cardiologists and psychiatrists. For example, the Resource Center assists nearly 130 additional providers who fall into this category.

As part of its EHR Incentive Program, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services defined meaningful use criteria to ensure providers use a certified EHR system to:

- Exchange health information as part of coordinated care,
- Report clinical quality care measures and
- Utilize electronic medical services such as e-prescribing.

For more information about the LHIT Resource Center services and the Quality Forum, please visit [www.lhcqf.org](http://www.lhcqf.org) or send an email to [rec@lhcqf.org](mailto:rec@lhcqf.org).

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#### **About the Louisiana Health Information Technology (LHIT) Resource Center**

The LHIT Resource Center was awarded through an objective review process by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC), as the designated organization in Louisiana to support primary health care providers on EHR adoption and meaningful use. Administered by the Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum, the Resource Center’s services include assistance with EHR vendor selection, project management, workflow redesign and meaningful use achievement. All Louisiana health care providers are eligible for the services; grant subsidies are available for certain primary care providers. If you are a provider or represent a critical access/rural hospital and would like more information, please email [rec@lhcqf.org](mailto:rec@lhcqf.org).

#### **About the Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum**

The Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum is a private, not-for-profit organization, dedicated to advancing evidence-based, collaborative initiatives to improve the health of Louisiana residents. Its main areas of focus include quality measurement and analytics, clinical quality improvement, the patient-centered medical home/care coordination model, outreach/education and health information technology. The Forum is the state-designated entity to support Louisiana’s health care providers and critical access/rural hospitals as they adopt and meaningfully use electronic health records and to lead the planning and implementation of the state’s health information exchange.