



NEWS RELEASE

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1200 KANSAS PRIORITY PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS COMMIT TO ADOPTING ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS

This week, the Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, Inc. (KFMC) Regional Extension Center (REC) met its federal funding goal and recruited its 1,200th priority primary care provider (PPCP). This accomplishment in Kansas has contributed to the attainment of reaching the national goal of 100,000 PPCPs who have committed to adopting electronic health records (EHRs). This represents over one third of the Primary Care Providers in the country.

“This is an enormous milestone for America’s healthcare providers,” said Farzad Mostashari, MD, ScM, national coordinator for health information technology at ONC. “EHR enabled providers are taking the first steps in transforming healthcare 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 RECs across the country.”

The REC is encouraged by the dedication and progress of participating practices in Kansas, which is contributing to the global adoption of EHRs nationally. On November 30, 2011 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released data that shows the percentage of physicians who have adopted basic electronic health records in their practice has doubled from 17 to 34 percent between 2008 and 2011 (with the percent of primary care doctors using this technology nearly doubling from 20 to 39 percent).

The mission of the Kansas REC is to accelerate the adoption and Meaningful Use of certified EHR technology among Kansas providers, working with at least 1,200 providers throughout Kansas. As a result of its outreach activities and those of its stakeholders and partners, the Kansas healthcare community has embraced and taken full advantage of valuable services offered by the federally funded program. Although not part of the federally funded opportunity, additional Kansas healthcare providers have also recognized the value of the skills, resources, and support provided by the Kansas REC and are utilizing their services to attain EHR implementation and quality goals. Despite reaching the program target, KFMC will accept 75 more PPCPs to receive services free of charge. To qualify however, healthcare providers must sign up by February 7, 2012. After February 7, 2012, primary care practices, priority or not, and specialty practices may still access REC services but will be assessed associated service fees.

KFMC Practice Consultants work with practices assessing their needs, assisting in the vendor selection process, implementing EHRs, redesigning workflows to improve efficiency, providing security policy assistance, facilitating functional interoperability and Health Information Exchange, and guiding the progress toward Meaningful Use.

Kolette Smith, M.D. is an Internal Medicine physician in solo practice in Parsons, Kansas and has been working with the Kansas REC since May 2011. Dr. Smith was still using paper medical records in May even though she had already chosen her EHR product. She attested to meaningful use and earned her

Medicare EHR Incentive Program payment on November 3, 2011. She went from paper records to Meaningful Use in 6 months with the help of her KFMC Practice Consultant. Dr. Smith states "Our practice consultant is absolutely wonderful! She simplified Meaningful Use for us. Anytime we had a problem she had the answer or knew someone who could help. I would definitely recommend the REC to assist any health organization in attesting for Meaningful Use".

The Kansas REC will continue to extend their reach into the healthcare community by sharing their experience and knowledge of best practices with those sites which were not a part of its original targeted group. Specialty practices, mental health practices, and larger primary care practices will benefit from employing the services of the REC to hasten their attainment of the efficient and Meaningful Use of electronic health records. "We want all practices in Kansas to maximize the incentive dollars available to them, but the benefit to Kansas healthcare goes well beyond. It is an exciting time of change in healthcare, and we are proud to take a leadership role in it. The Kansas REC is fast approaching its two year anniversary and celebrates its participants' success working toward patient safety and higher quality healthcare for Kansans", stated Michael Aldridge, VP of Information Technology and Director of the Kansas REC.

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The Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, Inc. (KFMC) is a not-for-profit organization focused on improving healthcare quality. In February, 2010 the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) designated KFMC as the Health Information Technology Regional Extension Center (HITREC) for the state of Kansas. KFMC has long been an organization that Kansas healthcare providers and patients trust. KFMC's other major contracts are with the HHS – Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services as the Quality Improvement Organization for Kansas and the state of Kansas, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Division of Health Care Finance as well as many private companies. KFMC's HITREC services are designed to take an organization from its current state – whether you are starting with a paper-based system or just need to optimize your current EHR – to Meaningful Use in order to qualify for the Medicare or Medicaid incentives.