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Lemont Primary Care Successfully Attests to Meaningful Use of Electronic Health Records

Becomes First Practice to Secure Meaningful Use through IL-HITREC

The Illinois Health Information Technology Regional Extension Center (IL-HITREC), along with its service partner, Health Directions, LLC, announced Aug. 9 that Lemont Primary Care of Lemont, IL, became the first practice working with IL-HITREC to attest to meaningful use of electronic health records (EHR) in the Medicare Electronic Health Records Incentive Program.

“Implementing a certified electronic medical record system and utilizing this process meaningfully is already having an impact on our patients. We have become more efficient, more productive and more responsive. I am a better doctor because of this,” said Catherine Baker, MD, an Internal Medicine Specialist at Lemont Primary Care, who successfully attested.

“But we could not have done this on our own. IL-HITREC and Health Directions were extremely effective in providing the guidance we needed to achieve qualification for meaningful use measurements.”

IL-HITREC is one of 64 Regional Extension Centers in the U.S designated by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC). IL-HITREC’s northeast satellite office has contracted with Health Directions to assist suburban Chicago-area primary care physicians in the facilitation and delivery of health information technology.

“IL-HITREC takes its mission very seriously. As one of the nation’s Regional Extension Centers, we are focused on the goal of helping physicians achieve meaningful use of electronic health records,” said John L. Lewis, Director of IL-HITREC.

“Our vision is for priority primary care physicians to use an electronic health record system in a meaningful way, which will ultimately improve the quality and efficiency of patient care in Illinois,” he added.

The HIT Regional Extension Centers were established as part of the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act; Title IV in Division B of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Signed into law by President Obama Feb. 17, 2009, the HITECH Act authorizes the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide a reimbursement incentive for physician and hospital providers who demonstrate the meaningful use of an EHR.

“The Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council serves as IL-HITREC’s Northeast Satellite Office, helping to provide education, outreach and technical assistance to priority primary care providers in the region. Critical to our mission is assisting them in selecting, successfully implementing and achieving meaningful use of certified EHR products,” said Sharon R. Miller, project manager of IL-HITREC’s Northeast Satellite Office.

The ARRA stimulus package includes financial incentives for healthcare providers who achieve meaningful use with an EHR. Medicare incentives can provide up to \$44,000 per provider over five years, and Medicaid incentives up to \$63,750 per provider over six years.

To attest to meaningful use, eligible physicians must report numerator, denominator, and exclusion results, if applicable, for the meaningful use objectives and attest that they have successfully met the requirements of the program. Once eligible physicians have successfully completed an online submission through the CMS attestation system, they can qualify for either Medicare or Medicaid EHR incentive payments.

"Through collaboration and project management, Health Directions supports physicians in the process by helping them navigate the clinical and business practice workflows combined with key performance indicators to achieve optimal results. We feel strongly about assisting physicians to meaningfully use their EHR so that they can deliver quality patient care," said Daniel J. Marino, President and CEO of Health Directions.

About IL-HITREC

IL-HITREC is a collaboration of several healthcare and educational organizations focused on providing education, outreach and technical assistance to priority primary care providers within Illinois, outside the City of Chicago. It is working to improve the quality and value of care physicians provide by attaining meaningful use of electronic health records. The Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council serves as IL-HITREC's Northeast Satellite Office. IL-HITREC is headquartered at Northern Illinois University and has satellite delivery offices in DeKalb, Chicago, Peoria and Sauget. For more information, visit www.ilhitrec.org.

About Health Directions

Health Directions is a national healthcare consulting firm focused on improving the financial, operational and strategic performance of physician practices and their affiliated hospital partners. Health Directions works with medical groups and hospitals to increase their net revenue, enhance physician satisfaction, take full advantage of Health IT and strengthen their strategic position. Founded in 1987, it has grown to become a leading provider of high-value guidance to medical groups and hospitals. For more information, visit www.healthdirections.com.

About Lemont Primary Care

Lemont Primary Care, SC, is the office of Catherine Baker, MD, an Internal Medicine Specialist, and Kenneth Porter, MD, a Pediatrician. They have been in practice in Lemont for more than 20 years and implemented an EHR program (eClinicalWorks-eCW) four years ago. For more information, visit www.lemontprimarycare.com.



Working with IL-HITREC, Internal Medicine Specialist, Dr. Catherine Baker (at computer) successfully attested to meaningful use of electronic health records in the Medicare Electronic Health Records Incentive Program on Aug. 9. Lemont Primary Care (of Lemont, IL) is the practice of Dr. Baker and her husband, Dr. Kenneth Porter, a pediatrician. Pictured clockwise from Dr. Baker are: Dr. Porter; Lucy Zielinski, Health Directions LLC; Roger Holloway, co-director of IL-HITREC; Tony Ursitti, Health Directions; Jose Lopez and Victoria Mioduszewski, both of IL-HITREC's Northeast Satellite Office; and Sharon Miller, project manager of IL-HITREC's Northeast Satellite Office.