

Welcome to the latest edition of *TeleNews* from the Center for Telemedicine and Telehealth at the University of Kansas Medical Center.

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Health Information Privacy and Security - National Issues, Kansas Focus



In 2006, with growing interest in the use of electronic health records (EHR) by government agencies, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provided funding for statewide assessments of the policies, regulations and laws in each state that might hinder development of EHR use, particularly those inhibiting development of Health Information Exchange (HIE).

Health Information Exchange (HIE) is the sharing of healthcare information electronically across organizations. The proper development of such systems is critical due to the need to balance privacy and security issues with the sharing of

information among a variety of dissimilar health care systems. In addition, efficient HIE systems will be crucial in supporting telehealth efforts as the integration of technologies becomes more seamless for health care providers.

Kansas was one of 34 states initially granted funds for state assessment, which was coordinated on the national level by the Health Information Security and Privacy Collaboration (HISPC), a part of HHS.

Today, the HISPC program has expanded to include 42 states, reviewing issues such as state laws regarding patient permission to disclose health information, restrictions on the release of clinical lab test results, and state controls regarding use of e-prescriptions and ownership of personal health information. The current phase of federal activity includes a variety of collaborative privacy and security projects designed to develop common solutions to state-by-state variations in privacy and security practices.

Effective July, 2009, HISPC activity in Kansas became the responsibility of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), with governance provided by the e-Health Advisory Council. The Council consists of representative health care providers, state agencies, and consumers from both the public and private sectors. While the Council as a whole will provide overall direction for Kansas' HIE Grant application and develop a governance structure in support of the ongoing statewide HIE operation, it will divide into three workgroups:

- Business and Technical Operations
- Legal and Policy issues
- Technical Infrastructure

Within the Council, the Kansas HISPC Steering Committee is charged with overall HISPC project outcomes and Kansas' recommendations to federal HISPC representatives this July. A cross-section of Council members serve on the HISPC Steering Committee, including Dr. Ryan Spaulding, director of KUCTT, and Dr. Helen Connors, executive director of the Center for Health Informatics at KUMC and HISPC Steering Committee chair.

With Kansas health care providers already beginning to adopt the use of EHRs (even prior to final definition of "meaningful use"), you can expect to see rapid developments surrounding Kansas HIE activity in the near future. Watch for HIE activity updates in issues of TeleNews throughout this coming year, or go directly to the e-Health Advisory Council website, <http://www.kanhit.org>.

A HISPC Legacy That You Can Put To Use



The HISPC Program signaled a major commitment by the federal government to establishing a method for making health care management more efficient and effective. The Journal of the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) reported last year that \$39.5

million was invested over the initial 3 years of the program (2006-2009) by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC), both divisions of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). During that time, HISPC was able to mobilize over 80% (42) of the states to develop a tangible beginning for intrastate HIE. Plus, the seven workgroups formed by the 42 states prompted the development of valuable HIE support materials that are currently available for public use.

One of the best examples of the HISPC legacy is the Health Information Security & Privacy Toolkit that is available from the University of Kansas Center for Health Informatics. The kit was developed as part of Kansas' HISPC program support and funded through HHS. (<http://www2.kumc.edu/healthinformatics/HISPC/Toolkit.htm>) The kit contains educational materials developed specifically to help answer questions about electronic sharing of private health information, including posters, brochures, guides, plans, audio, video, reports, surveys, etc.

For more information on the Health Information Security and Privacy Toolkit or Kansas' HISPC activity, contacty Gordon alloway, KUCTT Project Manager at galloway@kumc.edu, or check the KU Center for Informatics website at <http://www2.kumc.edu/healthinformatics/>.

KUCTT and K-INBRE Linked Through New Telemedicine Coordinator



The new year has brought a new coordinator, Sarah Velasquez, into the offices of the University of Kansas Center for Telemedicine and Telehealth (KUCTT). Sarah is shadowing KUCTT project managers and systems coordinators, familiarizing herself with interactive televideo scheduling and implementation at the University of Kansas Medical Center prior to focusing her efforts on activities for the Kansas IDeA Network of Biomedical Research and Excellence (K-INBRE).

K-INBRE, located at KU Medical Center, is a partnership of educational institutions that seeks to build and strengthen the biomedical community in the State of Kansas. Funded by the National Institute of Health, K-INBRE promotes the collaboration between ten Kansas educational institutions for development and sharing of scientific research: Emporia State University, Fort Hays State University, Haskell Indian Nations University, Kansas State University, Langston University,

Pittsburg State University, University of Kansas, University of Kansas Medical Center, Washburn University and Wichita State University.

Sarah received both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in agriculture from Kansas State University. Since graduation, she has worked in technical communications and public relations for a variety of organizations and companies. As Senior Coordinator for K-INBRE, Sarah will develop educational materials and web content for dissemination throughout the K-INBRE network of universities.

To reach Sarah, you can email her at svelasquez@kumc.edu. Additional information regarding K-INBRE is available at <http://www.kumc.edu/kinbre>.

Two Free Webinars



Overcoming Language and Cultural Barriers

EVENT: FREE webinar
TITLE: *Interpreting the Changing Culture of Healthcare*
WHEN: Wednesday, February 3, 2010
TIME: 12 Noon - 1:00 PM (Eastern Time)
WHO: Sheila Rettig, TN, MSN, President of Interpreter Network, LLC

As health care organizations face additional challenges to accommodate diverse patient populations, effective communication is critical. Accrediting bodies such as the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) are focusing on these issues and proposing new requirements for hospital certification. This free webinar will discuss how effective communication can result in better treatment and improved quality of patient care.

Interpreter Network (<http://www.interpreternetwork.net>) is a private company in Grand Rapids, MI, specializing in interpretative services for business, educational, medical and legal purposes.

American Telemedicine Association (ATA) Telemental Health Care Guidelines - Part 2

Don't miss the second in a series of seminars on ATA's telemental health standards and guidelines. Dr. Philip Hirsch, psychiatrist and telemental health expert, will continue his discussion of the changes and their impact on delivery of care. Even if you missed the first presentation, you are invited to participate in this event.

EVENT: FREE webinar
WHEN: Thursday, February 4, 2010
TIME: 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM (Eastern Time)
WHO: Phil Hirsch, PhD, Access Psychiatry

To enroll in either of these webinars or for more information, contact:
Midwest Alliance for Health Education
<http://www.midwesthealthed.org>

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