



For Immediate Release

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Health Home Stakeholders Meet to Assess Health IT Needs

Medicaid, DOH, RHIOs, Health Home participants, Health Plans, and NYeC discuss Health IT requirements of key Health Home program challenges

New York, NY – Stakeholders in the New York healthcare community came together today to discuss how to tackle various challenges and issues using health information technology (health IT) in the state’s new “Health Home” program, an initiative designed to make the state’s treatment of Medicaid patients more coordinated and efficient.

The meeting was hosted by the New York eHealth Collaborative (NYeC), the organization charged with promoting the implementation and adoption of health IT in the state. NYeC invited the New York State Dept. of Health (DOH), New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH), regional health information organizations (RHIOs), providers participating in the Health Home program, and others to learn more about health IT resources and identify challenges and potential solutions to those challenges in implementing the Health Home program.

The Health Home initiative was created under the recommendation of Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s Medicaid Redesign Team as a way to treat patients with multiple chronic illnesses more cost effectively and efficiently. Qualifying Medicaid patients are assigned to a healthcare facility that coordinates their care across multidisciplinary teams. The goal of the Health Home program is to develop and administer a consistent plan to improve care coordination and service integration. Medicaid estimates that there are approximately 700,000 Medicaid beneficiaries statewide who would be eligible to be enrolled in a Health Home.

Health IT is a critical part of making the system work, allowing providers to communicate with various parties involved in care management, track progress and results, etc. At today’s meeting, leaders from NYeC and the DOH coordinated conversation about how to leverage IT solutions for Health Home implementation and how NYeC and the Statewide Health Information Network of New York (SHIN-NY) can help.

Greg Allen, Director of the Division of Financial Planning and Policy at the NYS DOH, explained to the audience that a large percentage of the most at-risk Medicaid patients receive behavioral health and substance abuse care along with treatment for other medical issues. This care is often uncoordinated.

“We are trying to rebuild care management for some of our sickest patients. We need to wire the crevasse,” Allen stated. “But we need a new set of tools, or we just create new gaps.”

“The tools to bridge the gaps that we are starting to see with Health Homes-the tools for a managed care environment-don't exist,” agreed David Whitlinger, NYeC's Executive Director, speaking to the audience. “This is an opportunity to catalyze the health IT industry to build those tools for us. We want to learn about the requirements from you and embed them in the SHIN-NY so developers start building products that meet your needs.”

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The New York eHealth Collaborative (NYeC) is a not-for-profit organization, working to improve healthcare for all New Yorkers through health information technology (health IT). Founded in 2006 by healthcare leaders, NYeC receives funding from state and federal grants to advance health IT throughout the State of New York. NYeC works to develop policies and standards, to assist healthcare providers in making the shift to electronic health records, and to coordinate the creation of a network to connect healthcare providers statewide. The goal of NYeC is that no patient, wherever they may need treatment within the State of New York, is ever without fast, secure, accurate, and accessible information. For more information visit www.nyehealth.org.