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The HCC Supplies Area Health Care Providers with 31 EMR-equipped Computers

(November 11, 2011) Lexington, MO – An electronic medical record (EMR) is a digital medical record created in a hospital, clinic or physician’s office. Increasingly, health care providers are transitioning from the traditional paper records system to EMRs—Richmond Family Clinic and Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center Lafayette Family Medicine, Dental and WIC Services have made the switch, too. The computers were provided by the Health Care Coalition (HCC) of Lafayette County after receiving a \$900,000 Rural Health Technology Development Grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

“Health information technology continues to be a priority for the HCC,” said Toniann Richard, HCC executive director. “Whether it’s EMRs, e-prescribing technology or equipping health care specialist with the capabilities to exam and treat patients remotely, our goal is to support our Network providers with the latest health care technologies.”

Richmond Family Clinic in Ray County received six convertible computers equipped for EMRs and e-prescribing. Dr. Jamie Honeycutt, M.D, co-owner of the practice said the computers will also be used for patient education. “The benefits of this technology will allow us to provide more error free care to our patients,” she said. “It will help us better track patient compliance to wellness examinations and medication usage. Also, the e-prescribing features will help save time and minimize errors.”

Lexington, MO-based Samuel U. Rodgers received 25 EMR-supported computers. “With these computers, providers will be able to offer health care more efficiently,” said Lisa Millered, director of health information and systems management at Rodgers. “The chances of duplicating medical tests and treatments will be reduced. We will also be able to store a patient’s health information, over their lifetime, in one convenient location.”

The computers provide yet another purpose—helping both health care providers adopt “Meaningful Use” practices as mandated by the U.S government. Meaningful use guidelines require health care providers to utilize EMRs and electronic health records (EHRs) in a manner that maximizes efficiencies for both the patient and the provider. By 2017, health care practitioners are expected to have fully integrated EMR or EHR systems in place. Providers who meet meaningful use guidelines will receive financial incentives. Those who do not will be penalized.

EMR/EHR technology promises to:

- Protect patient data from loss and damage that paper records are often subjected to
- Reduce patient wait times as there is no longer a need to pull charts for the attending physician
- Enable seamless data transfer from one provider to another
- Establish patient histories across provider networks to eliminate duplication of services and tests, while providing a continuum of care
- Reduce prescription errors like correct dosages as legibility is no longer an issue

“We plan to track provider successes and efficiencies throughout this EMR migration,” Richard said. “We are already seeing patient satisfaction scores increase as a result of health information technology. This is truly an exciting time in health care.”

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About the HCC

The Health Care Coalition of Lafayette County collaborates with area agencies, businesses and other non-profits to advocate for the health and well being of Lafayette County residents. Among HCC’s current programs are:

- Health information technology initiatives to equip health care providers with the resources needed to offer telemedicine and telehealth services that increase patient access to quality health care;
- Social Innovation for Missouri (SIM) that addresses tobacco cessation and obesity prevention; among other programs; and
- Rural Missouri Health Co-op—with a workplace wellness component—aimed at creating a healthier workforce and reducing insurance premiums.

To learn more, visit HCCNetwork.org, WellnessWorks.HCCNetwork.org, 4everfit.HCCNetwork.org or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

