Regional Extension Centers: Support for EMR Adoption and Workforce Development

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My Focus Today

• HITECH Act overview

• Regional Extension Center Role
  – Direct assistance to assist providers in HIT adoption
  – Strengthening of the current and future healthcare Workforce
The State of Healthcare Today

The United States ranks:

- 37th Overall Performance
- 72nd Level of Health
- 41st Infant Mortality
- 46th Life Expectancy

The world’s most expensive healthcare system

Source: World Health Organization

The State of Healthcare Today

Healthcare Spending as a Percentage of Gross Domestic Product

- United States: >13%
- Germany, France, Cambodia, Norway, Iceland: 10% - 13%
- Canada, Australia, Sweden: 8% - 10%
- China, Japan, U.K., Spain, Finland: 5% - 8%
- Most African Countries: <5%

Primary Care Physicians Using Electronic Health Records

Norway 97%
United Kingdom 96%
Australia 95%
Sweden 94%
Italy 94%
Germany 72%
France 68%
U.S. 46%
Canada 37%

Source: The Commonwealth Fund

Tennessee Primary Care Physicians Using Electronic Health Records

East TN 27.4%
Middle TN 32.7%
West TN 24.6%
ALL Counties 29.1%

Among those without and EHR, 53.4% anticipate purchasing one within the next year.

Source: QSource Environmental Scan
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

- $36 B in funds over six years for HIT adoption
  - Policies and approaches for protecting the privacy and security of health information
  - Enhancing health information exchange
  - Grants and loans to providers
  - HIT adoption assistance through a Regional Extension Center
  - Improved training and education of health professionals in the area of HIT

HITECH Act Defined

Health Information Technology Economic and Clinical Health Act.

Goal: Ensure that each person in the United States has an electronic health record by 2014.
Provider Incentive Funds
Original estimate: $34 billion in Gross Outlays
Latest estimates: $14 – 24 billion

RECIPIENTS

Assistance Funds
($2 billion in Gross Outlays)
Meaningful Use

The federal economic stimulus law requires providers to demonstrate meaningful use of EHRs to qualify for Medicare and Medicaid incentive payments.

An Example of Collaboration Needed to Achieve Meaningful Use
Research to enhance HIT

HIT Extension Program

- National Extension Center provides support for best practices, collaboration and dissemination of national resources among Regional Extension Centers

- Regional Extension Centers (RECs):
  - Provides assistance to primary care providers in adopting and effectively using HIT
  - Local Workforce support through training and education, internships and promotion of HIT curriculum development
On June 17, 2009, the TN eHealth Advisory Committee approved the support of QSource in the development of a Statewide proposal for REC assistance.

- QSource coordinated application with stakeholders.
- QSource integrated REC services with the State’s strategy for health information exchange (HIE), workforce development, and State-sponsored grants and loans programs.
• tnREC is Tennessee’s regional extension center for health information technology (HIT).

• We work with providers across the state to ensure they meet government requirements for HIT implementation and payment by providing robust local technical assistance in implementing electronic health records (EHRs), improving healthcare quality and achieving meaningful use of HIT.

Partners

• Cumberland Pediatric Foundation
• Community Health Network
• CareSpan
• Memphis Medical Society
• Mid-South eHealth Alliance
• State of Tennessee Office of eHealth
• SharedHealth
• Tennessee Medical Association
• Tennessee Hospital Association
• Tennessee Primary Care Association
• Tennessee Health Information Management Association
• Tennessee Academy of Family Physicians
• Tennessee Medical Group Management Association
• Tennessee Association College of Physicians
• TennCare
• Tennessee Board of Regents
• University of Memphis School of Public Health
• University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center

• East Tennessee State University
• Middle Tennessee State University
• Vanderbilt University
• Lincoln Memorial University
• Middle Tennessee State University
• Walters State CC
• Pellissippi State CC
• Nashville State CC
• Nashville Career Advancement Center
Mission and Vision

**Mission**
To help practices select and successfully implement certified EHRs to achieve meaningful use status, participate in a statewide HIE, and improve the quality of care for all Tennesseans.

**Vision**
To create and enhance programs, services and collaborative relationships that improve healthcare quality.

GOAL
To make HIT adoption assistance available to all providers with priority given to small practice primary care providers (PCPs) serving underserved patient populations. tnREC will facilitate widespread HIT adoption using statewide and individualized educational and technical assistance recommendations with available resources.

**Service Area Profile**
- Total # PPCPs: 5,236
- Total # PCPs: 6,713
- Total # Providers: 10,000

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**Services & Functions of tnREC**

- **Workforce**
  - Partner with local resources to help integrate health IT into the initial and ongoing training of health professionals and supporting staff.

- **Vendor Selection**
  - Assess provider’s health IT needs and negotiating contracts with vendors or resellers.

- **Interoperability & HIE**
  - Will assist providers in meeting functional interoperability needs such electronic exchange of laboratory orders & results.

- **Implementation Support**
  - Provide end-to-end project management support over entire EHR implementation process.

- **Meaningful Use**
  - Provide expert assistance to help bring providers to Meaningful Use.

- **Practice & Workflow Design**
  - Assist practices in improvement of daily operations to help achieve Meaningful Use.

- **Outreach & Education**
  - Share knowledge of best practices to select, implement, and meaningfully use certified EHR technology.

- **Privacy & Security**
  - Implement best practices to facilitate the protection of patient information.

RECs will support and serve health care providers to help them quickly become adept and meaningful users of electronic health records (EHRs).
**Tennessee REC**

**HIT Adoption Assistance**
- Community Sponsored Vendor Fairs
- Vendor comparisons: usability scores, implementation barriers and service/contract comparison
- Hospital centric HIE support in rural areas
- Best practices in EHR Implementation, confidentiality, and security
- “Meaningful Use” certification and Medicaid grant application support

**Tennessee REC**

**Workforce Training and Development**
- Internship opportunities through cooperative agreements at Technology Centers/Community Colleges
- Training and Certification programs for the current workforce
- Educational Technology Advisory Committee (ETAC) to review educational institution HIT curricula and implement improvements
HIT Workforce Development

• Health IT Workforce Development Programs

• The tnREC Supporting HIT Workforce Development
  – Educational Technology Advisory Committee (ETAC)

• What Providers and Hospitals Can Do…

• Addressing Other Health IT Gaps…

The HIT Workforce Problem…

• Estimates based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Education, and independent studies indicate a shortfall over the next five years of approximately 50,000 qualified health IT workers required to meet the needs of hospitals and physicians as they move to adopt electronic health care systems.

Reasons for Concern...

- Data from a 2010 College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME) survey found staff levels and capabilities were among the top three concerns for nearly half of all survey respondents.


HITECH Priority Grants Program: Health IT Workforce Development Program

- Section 3016 of the HITECH Act authorizes the creation of a program to assist in the establishment and/or expansion of education programs designed to train a highly skilled workforce of health information technology (health IT) professionals to effectively put in place and enable the use of secure, interoperable electronic health record systems.
HITECH Priority Grants Program: Health IT Workforce Development Program (cont.)

- Focus is on key initiatives which will support the adoption and use of health IT:
  - A community college training program to create a workforce that can facilitate the implementation and support of an electronic healthcare system
  - High quality educational materials that institutions of higher education can use to construct core instructional programs
  - A competency examination program to evaluate trainee knowledge and skills acquired through non-degree training programs
  - Additional university programs to support certificate and advanced degree training

Community College Consortia to Educate Information Technology Specialists in Health Care

- The Community College Consortia Program provides approximately $70 million in assistance through cooperative agreements to five regional consortia. The five regions were created by pairing contiguous regions based on the population of the region.
- Each funded consortium will consist of a lead awardee and a number of identified member community colleges located within the region.
- Community colleges funded under this initiative will establish intensive, non-degree training programs that can be completed in six months or less by individuals with appropriate prior education and/or experience.
Information Technology Professionals in Health Care: Curriculum Development Centers

- The Curriculum Development Centers Program provides approximately $10 million in assistance through cooperative agreements to five non-profit institutions of higher education to develop curriculum and instructional materials to enhance workforce training programs primarily at the community college level.
- Materials prepared in collaboration with community colleges and aligned with a common set of nationally validated competencies will enable the rapid launch of standardized academic programs that meet the needs of the health care industry.

Information Technology Professionals in Health Care: Competency Examination for Individuals Completing Non-Degree Training

- The Competency Examination Program provides approximately $6 million in assistance through a cooperative agreement to one institution of higher education to support the development and initial administration of a set of health IT competency examinations.
Information Technology Professionals in Health Care: Program of Assistance for University-Based Training

• The University-Based Training Program provides approximately $32 million in assistance through competitively awarded training grants to nine institutions of higher education to establish programs that will rapidly increase the availability of individuals qualified to serve in specific health IT professional roles requiring university-level training.

• Each educational program will address one or more of the six targeted roles below, and each institution will include programs that address at least three of these roles:
  – Clinical/public health leader
  – Health information management and exchange specialist
  – Health information privacy and security specialist
  – Research and development scientist
  – Programmer and software engineer
  – Health IT sub-specialist

The tnREC Supporting HIT Workforce Development

• The tnREC has established the Educational Technology Advisory Committee (ETAC) to support the statewide HIT workforce development goals outlined by the Tennessee Regional Extension Center (tnREC), the State of Tennessee Office of eHealth Initiatives, and Health Information Partnership for Tennessee (HIP-TN).
**Educational Technology Advisory Committee (ETAC)**

- The ETAC is comprised of representatives from:
  - colleges and universities in TN's TBR and UT systems;
  - private academic institutions (LMU-DeBusk, Vanderbilt);
  - community colleges and technology centers within the TBR system;
  - professional healthcare organizations (THIMA, TMGMA, THA);

**ETAC Goals**

- Given the workforce development goals outlined in the HITECH Act and the "meaningful use" criteria stipulated by HHS, the ETAC’s objectives are to:
  - Work in partnership with TN’s universities, community colleges and technology centers to identify best-practices in curricular content related to HIT and EHRs.
  - Create a statewide HIT workforce development plan and communication strategy in harmonization with the InREC and HIP-TN goals and objectives.
  - Identify challenges associated with the effective dissemination of educational content for continuing education and annual employee retraining programs.
  - Identify future workforce development priorities and directions for improvement and enhancement.
ETAC’s Current Activity

- Survey of *existing* HIT/EHR curricula within each academic organization’s healthcare-specific colleges, departments and programs (i.e. Medicine, Nursing, Allied Health, Dentistry, Pharmacy, etc.) to identify best-practices and contextual or substantive gaps within existing curricula frameworks related to the required HIT/EHR educational objectives (vis-à-vis “meaningful use”.)
- Defined categorically as “short-term” vs. “long-term”

Short-Term HIT Training Opportunities

- Training provided by community colleges, technology centers, and community training programs to educate new and/or existing:
  - Mobile Adoption Support Positions
    - Practice workflow and information management redesign specialist
    - Clinician/practitioner consultants
    - Implementation support specialists
    - Implementation managers
  - Permanent Staff of Healthcare Delivery and Public Health Sites
    - Technical/software support staff
    - Trainers
Long-Term HIT Training Opportunities

• Training provided by 4-year colleges and universities to educate new and/or existing:
  – Information Technology Professionals in Healthcare Roles
    • Clinician/Public Health Leader
    • Health Information Management and Exchange Specialist
    • Health Information Privacy and Security Specialist
    • Research and Development Scientist
    • Programmers and Software Engineer
    • Health IT Sub-specialist

ETAC’s Stretch Goals

• Based upon the identified opportunities or gaps, create an HIT/EHR framework for content that promotes alignment and consistency with the codified definition and objectives of the meaningful use criteria.
• The development of a statewide workforce development plan and communication strategy.
• Dissemination of identified best-practices to all Tennessee institutions of higher education which have healthcare-specific programs.
What Providers and Hospitals Can Do…

• Leverage employees’ existing skill sets…
• Train and develop health IT staff from within the organization…
• Use remote hosting platforms or other alternative ways of implementing and operating health IT systems…

Addressing Other Health IT Gaps…

• Strengthen HIPAA data security standards…
• Adopt ICD-10 coding and transaction standards…
• Determine if revenue cycle system modifications are needed to adapt to changes in reimbursement structures…
How To Learn More

• Visit us online at www.tnrec.org or call us at 866.514.8595

• Attend one of the Vendor Labs taking place statewide in the upcoming months

• Subscribe to our Twitter feed to find out about the latest HIT developments, the tnREC team’s whereabouts and learning opportunities across the state

Thank You!

For more information about QSource and the services we provide, please visit us online at www.qsource.org.