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Health-e-LA Coalition™

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Federal E-Health Official Meets with Local Leaders on National Plan for Electronic Medical Records

(Los Angeles, CA) – Dr. Helga Rippen, Senior Advisor for Health Informatics in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Planning and Evaluation of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, met today with Health-e-LA, a growing coalition of leaders from health plans, hospitals, and healthcare associations coordinating various e-health efforts in Los Angeles County, to discuss President Bush’s plan for the health industry to adopt interoperable electronic health records (EHRs) within ten years.

Currently, the health industry is operating on a variety of modern and aged medical record systems that are not compatible with each other. Establishing the infrastructure for interoperable EHRs will enable health professionals to better diagnose and deliver care to a patient no matter where the person accesses health care.

"The healthcare providers of Los Angeles County, from both the public and private sectors, are uniting to improve the health care of all citizens by working toward electronic sharing of critically-needed medical information at the point of care," said Maggie Lohnes, Southern California Advocacy Chairperson of the Health Information and Management Systems Society and a member of the Health-e-LA Coalition. "The establishment of local and national infrastructures for seamless and secure exchange of electronic medical records would help us better serve the health care needs of all citizens in Los Angeles County."

Rippen addressed an audience of over one hundred health care leaders on the development of a national health information network, industry-led standards on electronic medical records and the potential formation of regional health information organizations. She will report back to Dr. David Brailer, National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, on the comments of attendees concerning the development of infrastructure for EHRs.

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BACKGROUND

Health-e-LA™ is a growing coalition of health care plans and providers, health care associations, government agencies, foundations, and researchers dedicated to developing an infrastructure for multi-organizational electronic exchange of clinical health care

information throughout the greater Los Angeles region. The vision of the Coalition is a future in which the electronic exchange of patient-controlled health records for residents of the Los Angeles region is seamless, easy, and secure, no matter where the person accesses health care.