

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services 600 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck ND 58505

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Presentation Medical Center in Rolla Receives First Medicaid Electronic Health Record Incentive Payment

Bismarck, ND - Presentation Medical Center in Rolla, N.D., became the first eligible organization in North Dakota to receive state Medicaid incentive funds from the N.D. Department of Human Services to convert to electronic health records. The rural critical access hospital is receiving \$498,500 to defray expenses for implementing electronic health records software.

“An electronic health record system can cost a medical facility over \$1 million to implement,” said Michael Pfeifer, chief executive officer of Presentation Medical Center. “This incentive payment will help our organization offset some of the costs so we can continue to provide quality care to the patients we serve.”

A public check presentation will be hosted by Presentation Medical Center on **Tuesday, January 24, 2012, at 1 p.m.** in the Inservice Room-Lower Level to celebrate their success as the first organization in the state to benefit from the Medicaid Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive Payment Program.

States can choose to take part in the Medicaid EHR Incentive Payment Program that provides payments to eligible hospitals and medical professionals to enable them to implement electronic health records and move toward electronic health information exchange that may improve care for all North Dakotans.

“Electronic health records benefit the patient by making their medical information available so it can be shared in real-time regardless of where the patient goes for care. It helps the patient’s provider coordinate care with other providers involved in the patient’s care to ensure they receive high quality care,” said Nancy Willis, Medicaid Systems Operations and Health Information Technology director. “We congratulate Presentation Medical Center for investing these dollars on technology that helps improve patient care.”

Prior to receiving the funding, Presentation Medical Center also sought and received a low interest loan through the Bank of North Dakota to help pay for electronic health record implementation, planning, and software installation. The North Dakota/Minnesota Regional Extension Center for Health Information Technology provided consulting services to the rural medical center for this work.

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In 2010, the N.D. Department of Human Services, which administers the Medicaid Program, agreed to participate in the incentive program.

Besides Presentation Medical Center, five other critical access hospitals; two Indian Health Service hospitals; five large urban hospitals; and 37 eligible professionals including physicians, dentists, nurse practitioners, and nurse midwives have applied for the Medicaid incentive payment and are in different stages of review and approval. Physician assistants also may qualify, but only if they are the lead provider in a federally qualified community health center.

For hospitals to be eligible for the incentive payments, at least 10 percent of their patients must be Medicaid participants. Eligible medical professionals must have 30 percent Medicaid patient volume (at least 20 percent for pediatricians), plus meet other criteria in the 2009 Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act. Incentives may be sought through 2016 and paid out through 2021.

In 2004, President George W. Bush began an initiative to improve the nation's healthcare by transitioning from paper medical records to electronic records. Bush increased appropriations to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to accomplish this.

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