

## U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

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# News Release

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## **HHS Awards Contracts for Trial Implementations of the Nationwide Health Information Network**

### ***Major Step toward Secure and Portable Health Information for American Consumers and Clinicians***

HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt announced today the award of contracts totaling \$22.5 million to nine health information exchanges (HIEs) to begin trial implementations of the Nationwide Health Information Network (NHIN).

These contracts will create a secure foundation for basic health information exchange between select HIEs upon which more complex functions will be possible over time. This work will advance the nation toward the President's goal of most Americans having access to secure electronic health records by 2014, by creating a secure foundation for health information exchange that can follow Americans throughout their lives.

"These trial implementations are taking place in communities across America that are leading the way to health care transformation using secure, interoperable health information technology," Secretary Leavitt said. "Trial implementations of the Nationwide Health Information Network will bring us steps closer to a health IT system that will improve quality of care, increase efficiencies in health care, and improve disease prevention."

Awardees include the following organizations, representing broad-based state and regional health information exchanges:

- CareSpark -- Tricities region of Eastern Tennessee and Southwestern Virginia
- Delaware Health Information Network -- Delaware
- Indiana University -- Indianapolis metroplex
- Long Beach Network for Health -- Long Beach and Los Angeles, California
- Lovelace Clinic Foundation -- New Mexico
- MedVirginia -- Central Virginia
- New York eHealth Collaborative -- New York
- North Carolina Healthcare Information and Communications Alliance, Inc. -- North Carolina
- West Virginia Health Information Network -- West Virginia

These contractors will participate in the NHIN Cooperative -- a collaborative to test and demonstrate the exchange of private and secure health information among providers, patients and other health care stakeholders.

"The NHIN trial implementations are another important step toward improving health and care of individuals and communities and to continue to modernize health care delivery," said Dr. Robert Kolodner, national coordinator for health information technology.

HHS' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is expected to announce contract awards in December, 2007, that will complement these efforts to further develop the NHIN. This joint work will ensure that health information exchanges using the NHIN infrastructure can support the community-based activities of public health agencies.

Interim NHIN results will be shared through three public forums and other public demonstrations of real-time information exchange at the end of the first contract year (September 2008).

Once created, the NHIN health information exchanges' specifications and related testing materials will be placed in the public domain to facilitate widespread participation in the developing the NHIN.

HIEs are networks that securely connect electronic health records for providers and patients. Together, these HIEs will form the "network of networks," that will form the NHIN. The NHIN trial implementations will leverage recent accomplishments of HHS, its contractors and partners, including: the Healthcare Information Technology Standards Panel (HITSP), the Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology (CCHIT), the Health Information Security and Privacy Collaboration (HISPC) and the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics (NCVHS).

More details on these contracts are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/healthit>.

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Note: All HHS press releases, fact sheets and other press materials are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/news>.

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