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PRESS RELEASE

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**RIQI First in Nation to Include Health Information Service Providers (HISPs)
in Regional Extension Center Vendor Marketplace**

***Statewide resource, RI REC, helps Rhode Island providers research and connect with
EHR software vendors and technical consultants, as well as, newly added, HISPs to implement Direct***

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND—The Rhode Island Quality Institute (RIQI), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality, safety and value of healthcare in Rhode Island, announced today that it has expanded the Regional Extension Center's current Vendor Marketplace to include Health Information Service Providers (HISPs). Similar to an Internet Service Provider (ISP), a HISP is responsible for delivering messages via Direct from a sender to a receiver via the Internet. HISPs encrypt, authenticate, and run trust verification activities to ensure patient health information is secure.

The Direct Project, sponsored by The Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC), specifies a simple, secure, scalable, standards-based way for participants to send authenticated, encrypted health information directly to known, trusted recipients over the Internet. It seeks to benefit patients and providers by improving the transport of health information, making it faster, more secure, and less expensive. As vendors in a brand new industry, HISPs play an important role in delivering important clinical information via Direct from one care provider to another.

Designed to be a scalable and affordable solution for practices of all sizes, Direct replaces less secure communication methods, such as faxes, promotes a simple means of exchange between PCPs and specialists, and can facilitate the adoption of Stage 1 Meaningful Use around the electronic exchange of clinical information.

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In order to be able to send Direct email, each provider must engage a HISP and set up a Direct email account. RI REC is free for all health-care professionals and, as a service to all Rhode Island providers, has identified, pre-qualified, and added HISPs to the Vendor Marketplace. Providers who are members will benefit from established standards, best practices and discounted rates that RI REC requires of all HISPs in the Vendor Marketplace.

“The Direct Project is truly a collaborative effort which has come this far as a result of dedicated public and private partners,” stated Mat Kendall, Director, Office of Provider Adoption Support at ONC. “It is exciting to see the RECs evolve to assist providers in the whole package of EHR adoption, including in the use of standards-based information exchange.”

Rhode Island providers who are interested in adopting Direct should join RI REC. As members, providers will have the opportunity to review pre-qualified HISPs including: Ability Network, Inc.; Health-ISP; Inpriva; MaxMD; and Secure Exchange Solutions.

“RIQI has been involved with the ONC and committed to Direct since its inception,” commented Gary Christensen, COO & CIO at RIQI. “As a result of the work we’ve done over the past year, we are in a unique position to offer a multiservice program through our REC and roll out technology that will help doctors adopt EHR technology, set up and use Direct for sharing health information, and achieve Meaningful Use.”

On May 18, 2011, from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m., RI REC will hold its second Health IT Expo at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Warwick, Rhode Island. This event gives providers the opportunity to speak with RI REC vendors and consultants, test software, and learn from others’ experiences with EHRs. Walk-ins from the Rhode Island healthcare community are welcome.

For more information on RI REC’s pre-qualified HISPs and to enroll in RI REC, please visit www.DocEHRTalk.org or call RI REC Member Services at 888-858-4815, option 4, or email RIREC@riqi.org

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About the Rhode Island Quality Institute (RIQI)

Founded in 2001, the Rhode Island Quality Institute (RIQI) is a collaboration of leaders in the Rhode Island community who share the intent to substantively improve the healthcare system in the state. The collaboration includes CEOs of hospitals, health insurers, and businesses, along with leaders of consumer groups, academia, and government. RIQI’s mission is to significantly improve the quality, safety, and value of health care in Rhode Island. RIQI is the Governor-designated sole Regional Health Information Organization (RHIO) for Rhode Island, chosen to coordinate the statewide Health Information Exchange (HIE). As the RHIO, RIQI is charged with bringing together health care stakeholders within the state and governing HIE among them for the purpose of improving health outcomes in the community. For more information, visit www.RIQI.org.