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## **Public Health Press Release**

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### **Physician Use of Health Information Technology (HIT) on the Rise**

The Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) has released the results of its 2011 survey of physician HIT use. The number of Rhode Island-licensed physicians using HIT (including electronic health records and e-prescribing) has increased nearly 12% since 2009.

Of the 2,132 physicians who responded (63% response rate), 81% reported having electronic health records (EHRs) in one or more office location. Physicians who did not respond to the survey are counted as not having EHRs; therefore, the state's overall EHR adoption rate of 51% is similar to the national average of 48%.

"We are pleased to see that more physicians have EHRs," said Interim Director of Health Michael Fine, MD. "Increased use of EHRs lays a strong foundation for creating the ability to practice population-based primary care. When used to its fullest potential, EHRs can help a physician identify specific areas for improvement and implement preventive measures. This is one more way that primary care providers can partner with HEALTH to improve the health of all Rhode Islanders."

Insurers and policy makers use survey results in their efforts to support statewide HIT use, and consumers can check if an individual provider uses EHRs. To view the results and methods of the *2011 Physician HIT Survey*, visit <http://www.health.ri.gov/physicians/about/quality/>.

Federal and state resources are available to help healthcare providers implement EHRs. For information about incentive programs and technical assistance, visit <http://www.docehrtalk.org/>  
For information about the Medicaid incentive program, visit [http://www.dhs.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Public/MA\\_Providers/ehr\\_incentive\\_prg.pdf](http://www.dhs.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Public/MA_Providers/ehr_incentive_prg.pdf)

This project, led by HEALTH and Quality Partners of Rhode Island, reflects input from Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island, Tufts Health Plan, Rhode Island Quality Institute, UnitedHealthCare of New England, and other healthcare leaders in the state.

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