



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 31, 2008

CONTACT:

Matia Storey Edwards
404-463-5391

DCH Commissioner Acknowledges Health Information Technology Week

Health Information Technology and Transparency Advisory Board Works With DCH to Promote HIT Awareness Efforts in Georgia

ATLANTA – Dr. Rhonda Medows, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH), is acknowledging the importance of the awareness and adoption of Health Information Technology by recognizing November 2 – 8 as Health Information & Technology (HI&T) Week. On the final day of HI&T Week, Dr. Medows is speaking to the Georgia Academy of Family Physicians on electronic health records.

“Health care consumers and patients are the conduit to evolving our health care practices beyond a paper-based world,” Dr. Medows said. “Health Information Technology Week is an opportune time to engage Georgia’s consumers in discussions about the benefits of HIT, and the importance of privacy and security as it relates to electronic health records.”

DCH’s HITT Accomplishments:

- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services awarded DCH a Medicaid Transformation Grant to assist with the implementation of Georgia’s Transparency Web Site for Healthcare Consumers
- DCH issued health information exchange (HIE) grants to four organizations that will help foster the development of HIE, electronic prescribing, and/or adoption of electronic medical records across Georgia
- DCH submitted a proposal to participate in the Health Information Security and Privacy Collaborative with seven other states
- DCH contracts with IBM to develop Transparency Web site
- DCH announced the Georgia Rx Exchange
- Georgia selected to be a pilot site for the Medicare Demonstration Project
- DCH provided the Governor’s Office with a demo of the Transparency Web Site

2008 Members of the HITT Advisory Board

Mike Adloo, Pharmacy Member – Adloo is a regional manager for Wal-Mart’s Pharmacy Division. He is responsible for the operations of 800 pharmacies in the Southeast region.

Eleanor Brown, Health Services Member – Brown supervises the revision and training of operating procedures and oversight of the Georgia Department of Corrections’ Mental Health/Mental Retardation Services for the mentally ill.

Dr. Jack Mabry Chapman, Board Vice Chair and Physician Member – Chapman is an ophthalmologist and serves on the Greater Hall Chamber Healthcare Committee.

Scott Evelyn, Health Plan Member – Evelyn manages CIGNA HealthCare of Georgia market accounts and is responsible for driving its sales revenues and profit growth.

Honorable Judson Hill, Legislative Member – Senator Hill’s legislative efforts focus on quality of health care, tort reform, small-business growth, and improved educational opportunities for children. He is also managing director of Day Capitol, LLC.

Patricia Lavelly, Board Chair and Information Technology Member – Lavelly is vice president and chief information officer of Memorial Health University Medical Center in Savannah. In this position, she provides IT leadership and planning for two state, academic health care organizations serving a 35 county of southeast Georgia and southern South Carolina.

Martha Okafor, Public Health Member – Okafor is deputy director for the Division of Public Health, Health Information, Policy, Strategy and Accountability (HIPSA) under the Georgia Department of Human Resources. At state and local levels, she leads HIPSA in reaching improved birth outcomes, healthy behaviors and safety and protection from health hazards.

Joel Schuessler, Legal Member – Schuessler is responsible for counseling DeKalb Medical’s hospital administration and staff on legal matters related to health care related activities and the operation of a clinically integrated hospital system.

Diane Turcan, Information Technology Member – Turcan is the director of Healthcare Marketing for AT&T. She is known for pioneering telehealth applications and medical information networks and is currently working with states and health information exchange organizations on the development of ehealth and telemedicine networks.

Marcia Denise Watson, Board Secretary and Laboratory Member – Watson is the health plan & payor market account executive for Quest Diagnostics, Inc. She manages laboratory contracts and servicing for over 50 health plans for Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee.

HI&T Week is a venue for health information management professionals to convene in support of the benefits of health information technology and its contributions to the health care industry. For more information on the American Health Information Management Association’s HI&T Week, log on to <http://www.ahima.org/hitweek>.

#

Equal Opportunity Employer