



L.A. Care
HEALTH PLAN®

Health Information Technology

One in a series of policy briefs from L.A. Care Health Plan

L.A. Care is a Leader in Health Information Technology

L.A. Care believes that Health Information Technology (HIT) that saves lives and improves health outcomes should be available to all. As America's largest public health plan, we are committed to ensuring that L.A. County's traditional and safety net providers in underserved communities (and our members, their patients) are not left behind.

L.A. Care has invested over \$5 million in grants, provider incentives, partnerships and learning collaboratives to promote the adoption of electronic health records, disease registries, e-prescribing, web-based consulting and immunization registries to our providers.

L.A. Care believes in a "whole body" approach regarding HIT, offering a variety of different entry points for doctors to test, adopt, and implement a wide range of technologies.

Provider Incentives

L.A. Care offers incentives to providers to encourage the adoption and integration of HIT. Providers can qualify for incentive payments covering several technologies, including:

- Electronic health records (EHR)
- E-prescribing
- Disease and immunization registries

By the end of 2009, L.A. Care will have awarded up to \$1.3 million in HIT financial incentives.

Grants

L.A. Care recognizes that for the typical doctor, simply purchasing the technology is just the first step. Doctors need help in training staff, re-engineering work processes, and integrating technology into their offices to fully take advantage of the quality improvements and cost savings possible with HIT.

Community clinics often do not have the resources available to implement HIT on their own. As a result, L.A. Care has launched a program offering grants from \$100,000 to \$500,000 for clinics that pays for technology, consulting, staff training, and implementation. So far, over \$2.6 million has been committed.

Provider Programs

L.A. Care offers its providers several opportunities to try different health information technologies, at virtually no cost to the doctor. L.A. Care will set up the technology, teach staff how to use it, and then evaluate its effectiveness. Programs include:

- eConsult – Web-based program that allows a primary care physician to consult with a specialist over the Internet. Often, a diagnosis is made and a specialist visit for the patient may be avoided. Launched in 2009.
- ePrescribing – L.A. Care has been testing e-prescribing technology in mixed settings, ranging from safety net clinics, large group practices, and solo practices, since 2006. Findings from this effort have identified the significant barriers that physicians need to overcome to adopt HIT.



A public entity serving Los Angeles County • 555 West Fifth Street • Los Angeles, CA 90013
telephone 213.694.1250 • facsimile 213.694.1246 • www.lacare.org

Accreditation of Medi-Cal, Healthy Kids and Healthy Families Program.

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- Registries – L.A. Care currently offers a chronic care disease registry to 500 selected physicians, where we populate the data ourselves with pharmacy and lab information. In addition, L.A. Care staff provides on-the-ground technical assistance to physician offices that implement LINK, a county-wide immunization registry. More than 400 doctor offices are now taking advantage of this technology and reducing duplication of vaccines among children.

Learning Collaboratives

L.A. Care is a co-sponsor of the Building Clinic Capacity for Quality (BCCQ) learning collaborative, a partnership with UniHealth Foundation and Kaiser Permanente to enhance the Health Information Technology capabilities of safety net clinics. This effort includes educational conferences, free technology assessments for participating clinics, and follow-up funding to selected clinics.

Health Information Exchange

L.A. Care is heavily involved with the Long Beach Network for Health (LBNH), a National Health Information Network (NHIN) demonstration project.

L.A. Care is also a co-convenor and founding member of Health-e-LA (healthela.org), a coalition of health plans, public agencies, foundations, universities, and consumer groups dedicated to fostering the development of standards for health information exchange throughout the nation's largest county.

At the state level, L.A. Care is a founding member of CalRHIO, dedicated to finding a statewide solution for health information exchange. L.A. Care is also participating with California Health and Human Services, chairing workgroup committees to draft plans for the state's response to the Federal Stimulus requirements.

L.A. Care Health Plan is a public entity and community-accountable health plan serving residents of Los Angeles County through a variety of programs including Medi-Cal, Healthy Families, L.A. Care's Healthy Kids, and L.A. Care's Medicare Advantage Special Needs Plan. L.A. Care is a leader in developing new programs through innovative partnerships designed to provide health coverage to vulnerable populations and support the safety net. With nearly 800,000 members, L.A. Care is the nation's largest public health plan.

For more information:

Elaine Batchlor, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer
(213) 694-1250, x4191
ebatchlor@lacare.org

Sajid Ahmed,
Director, Health Information Technology
(213) 694-1250, x4347
sahmed@lacare.org

June 2009



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