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## ***London Pediatrician Receives First Medicaid EHR Incentive Check***

**Columbus** – Dr. Gregg Alexander is the first physician in Ohio to receive a Medicaid incentive check for using electronic health records (EHRs) in his solo practice at Madison Pediatrics in London, Ohio. Over a three-month period, children on Medicaid made up 48 percent of his visits, resulting in a check for \$21,250.

“This helps me continue my vision, which is to try to deliver high-end, technologically advanced pediatric services in rural America, in rural Ohio,” Dr. Alexander said. “For my colleagues who are just about to go electronic, this is huge. The cost of the system or of implementing the system with preparation, workflow changes and training – these are barriers to adoption.”

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) provided the sign-up application to Dr. Alexander through a new [Medicaid Provider Incentive Program \(MPIP\)](#), which allots federal financial incentives to Medicaid providers who adopt, implement or upgrade electronic health records and use them in a meaningful way.

“This significant investment in Ohio’s Medicaid program lays the foundation for the future delivery of health care in the state,” said Medicaid Director John McCarthy. “Adopting electronic health records will improve health outcomes for all Ohioans, including individuals enrolled in Medicaid, and will increase efficiency throughout the healthcare system.”

Qualifying Medicaid providers who follow federal electronic health record incentive guidelines over six years are eligible for federal incentive payments of up to \$63,750. Qualifying hospitals could be eligible for much more.

“Ohio Medicaid consumers and providers stand to greatly benefit from the widespread adoption of EHR technology,” said ODJFS Director Michael Colbert. “EHRs can improve patient care, increase safety and save money.”

The [Ohio Health Information Partnership](#), the nonprofit responsible for overseeing regional extension center services to 6,000 priority primary care physicians in Ohio, now has 3,949 signed up with 2,051 slots remaining. The partnership also is creating the technological infrastructure so physicians, hospitals, labs, pharmacies and others involved in a patient’s care can exchange information all across the state.

“As we continue to sign up physicians, and they receive both Medicaid and Medicare incentives for the meaningful use of electronic health records, the healthcare for all Ohioans will improve,” said Dan Paoletti, chief executive officer of the Ohio Health Information Partnership. “The statewide health information exchange – CliniSync – will eventually save taxpayers and doctors time, money and lives.”

Dr. Alexander has been on the cutting edge of improving patient care through electronics and other advanced technologies for many years and is currently in the process of upgrading his office’s EHR. For physicians in Central Ohio who do not have an EHR system or want to upgrade, he recommends the services of the [Central Ohio Health Information Exchange \(COHIE\)](#), one of Ohio’s seven regional extension service centers that are providing free services to qualified physicians.

“COHIE is a helping hand to aid physicians in adopting, preparing for and selecting an EHR system, and then, to assist them in achieving the various stages of meaningful use required by the federal program,” said Matt Esker, COHIE’s director. “Dr. Alexander can now use these funds to reinvest them into his practice, which will better serve the pediatric population of Madison County.”

Go to the MPIP website at <http://JFS.ohio.Gov/OHIP/provder.stm> and click on “Ohio Medicaid Provider Incentive Program for Electronic Health Records” to find out more about the attestation process.

To read about Dr. Alexander’s positive, personal experience with the MPIP process, go to his blog at <http://www.histalkpractice.com/2011/06/10/doctalk-by-dr-gregg-61011/>.