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## News Release

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### *Ohio's Health Information Exchange Plan Approved*

#### *Physician sign-ups for electronic health records surpass 3,000*

Columbus - Ohio's plan for connecting physicians, hospitals and other health professionals through a statewide health information exchange (HIE) got a thumbs up January 25 from federal officials within the [Office of the National Coordinator of Health Information Technology](#) (ONC).

The [Ohio Health Information Partnership \(OHIP\)](#) today announced the approval, which releases \$13.8 million in federal funds to Ohio to start the implementation of a data exchange to connect physicians, hospitals and medical providers across the state with one another.

"We're excited to make the vision of a statewide health information system accessible to those who need it," said Dan Paoletti, interim CEO of OHIP and vice-president of data services at the [Ohio Hospital Association](#). "We're paving the way for Ohio's entire healthcare system to be more efficient, cost effective and patient-centered."

Ohio joins a national push to improve the health care system so doctors, hospitals, healthcare facilities, pharmacies, labs and other entities can electronically and securely share patient information. To receive federal funds, OHIP created an extensive strategic and operational plan to show how Ohio will support and deploy this clinical data exchange and sustain its efforts into the future. Ohio initially received \$1 million in 2010 to begin the planning process.

"OHIP is fortunate to have an enthusiastic and committed group of healthcare experts from the community to spearhead this effort," said Peg Eichner, OHIP's project manager of HIE services. An HIE committee comprised of physicians, hospital leaders, health plan payors and state agency representatives shaped the plan.

Ohio continues to build a solid base of physicians and providers who will eventually use the HIE —3,058 physicians and other healthcare providers signed up to receive services for the adoption and implementation of electronic health records over the past four months. OHIP and its [seven regional partners](#) have reached the 50 percent milestone toward a targeted goal of 6,000 Ohio physicians.

OHIP's Chief Information and Operating Officer Fred Richards said he hopes to fill the remaining 2,942 slots allotted by the federal ONC by summer 2011. A vendor will soon be procured to create the HIE infrastructure to facilitate the exchange of these electronic health records, Richards said.



“We’re ready to move forward with an awareness campaign on how important this health information exchange will be in creating a healthier Ohio,” Richards said. “We hope to engage physicians, hospitals and providers to connect with the HIE beginning in April,” he said.

[Statewide videoconferences](#) will be held in regional areas throughout Ohio on March 8, with the hub at the Ohio State University Student Union. Final locations and registrations will begin February 7 so physicians and staff can go to local hospitals and entities to view the videoconference and ask questions. The videoconferences will feature state and federal officials, OHIP leaders and a presentation from a neighboring state about a successful HIE.

To review the [State Health Information Exchange Plan](#) and learn more, visit OHIP’s [HIE page](#). OHIP’s website is [www.OHIPonline.org](http://www.OHIPonline.org)

OHIP is a nonprofit, state-designated entity responsible for establishing regional extension centers to assist physicians and hospitals with information technology and for creating the infrastructure for a health information exchange in the state. The partnership includes the [Ohio State Medical Association](#), [Ohio Osteopathic Association](#), [Ohio Hospital Association](#), [BioOhio](#) and the [State of Ohio](#). OHIP is funded through the Office of the National Coordinator, U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, grant numbers 90RC0012 and 90HT0024.