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Rhode Island Quality Institute Celebrates Local Doctors as Leaders in Implementation of Electronic Health Records

First healthcare providers from RI's Regional Extension Center successfully achieve Meaningful Use

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND—The Rhode Island Quality Institute (RIQI), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality, safety and value of healthcare in Rhode Island, recently recognized local healthcare providers from Aquidneck Medical Associates, Coastal Medical, Dr. Douglas Foreman, and Dr. Lynn Ho of North Kingstown Family Practice at an event at RIQI for their leadership in the nationwide transition toward electronic health records (EHR). Rhode Island's Regional Extension Center (REC), a service of RIQI and designated by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC), assists clinicians in Rhode Island on becoming meaningful users of electronic health records. The evening's celebration on September 15, 2011 included recognizing these providers and welcoming them into an exclusive group of leaders—the Meaningful Use Vanguard (MUV).

MUV is an initiative of ONC, and is designed to honor, thank, and bring together clinicians who have successfully implemented electronic health records. MUVers (members of the MUV program) serve as local leaders and peer advisors in the nation's transition toward an electronically-enabled health care system.

"The providers we are here to celebrate this evening have a highly developed sense of purpose. Tonight we celebrate their accomplishments and welcome them to a unique group of early adopters that are being celebrated as MUVers," commented Laura Adams, President and CEO of RIQI. "In making the transition from a paper-based system to electronic health records, they have faced unique and often complex challenges. Yet they have forged ahead to fully realize the benefits of delivering more efficient, higher quality, and safer care to their patients. Additionally, they have shown that they are committed to driving the most important transformation of the United States' healthcare system in a decade."

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Medicare and Medicaid incentive payments are available to eligible professionals and hospitals when they adopt, implement, upgrade, or demonstrate meaningful use of a certified electronic health record. The payments, made through the federal Medicare and Medicaid programs, mean that physicians and other eligible professionals can qualify for as much as \$44,000 through Medicare or \$63,750 through Medicaid. Hospitals can qualify for payments of \$2 million or more.

“The twenty-five objectives of Meaningful Use are not just tasks on a checklist; they make up a set of very carefully assembled items that together will help improve the healthcare delivery system,” stated Joshua Seidman, PhD, Director, Meaningful Use, HHS Office of the National Coordinator during his presentation at Rhode Island’s first Meaningful Use celebration. “Meaningful Use is a real achievement. It is about accountable care, coordinated care, and patient centered care. Clinicians who are part of the meaningful use vanguard are the pioneers leading the way who are demonstrating what can be done when electronic healthcare records are used in the right way.”

Adams added, “Aquidneck Medical Associates, Coastal Medical, Dr. Douglas Foreman and Dr. Lynn Ho are truly at the forefront of something that is destined to change how healthcare is provided in this nation forever.”

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About the Rhode Island Quality Institute (RIQI)

Founded in 2001, the Rhode Island Quality Institute (RIQI) is a collaboration of leaders in the Rhode Island community who share the intent to substantively improve the healthcare system in the state. The collaboration includes CEOs of hospitals, health insurers, and businesses, along with leaders of consumer groups, academia, and government. RIQI’s mission is to significantly improve the quality, safety, and value of health care in Rhode Island. RIQI is the Governor-designated sole Regional Health Information Organization (RHIO) for Rhode Island, chosen to coordinate the statewide Health Information Exchange (HIE). As the RHIO, RIQI is charged with bringing together health care stakeholders within the state and governing HIE among them for the purpose of improving health outcomes in the community. For more information, visit www.RIQI.org.

About the Rhode Island Regional Extension Center

RI REC, a service of the Rhode Island Quality Institute, was named a Regional Extension Center through an objective review process by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, as the designated organization in Rhode Island to support primary health care providers on electronic health records (EHR) adoption and meaningful use. To find out more about how to register for the incentives, or to get assistance with implementing EHRs for your health care practice, visit www.docehrtalk.org