



July 7, 2010

Dear IPA Executive Director:

As you know, the The IPA Association of America (TIPAAA) supports of the efforts of the Department of Health and Human Services Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) to encourage the adoption and use of electronic health records (EHRs) in medical practice. To that end, ONC and TIPAAA share a common goal: to achieve an electronically-enabled health care system that supports high-quality, coordinated care; fully engaged patients and improved public health. However, we also recognize that achieving this goal will require mutual understanding, collaboration and support.

Recently, officials from the ONC met with TIPAAA leadership regarding the provisions of The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act of 2009 that are specifically designed to provide the necessary assistance and technical support to providers and ensure the workforce is properly trained and equipped to be meaningful users of EHRs.

These provisions include establishing 60 Health Information Technology Regional Extension Centers (HITRECs) that offer technical assistance, guidance, and information on best practices to support and accelerate health care providers' efforts to become meaningful users of EHRs. Each of the 60 HITRECs serves a defined geographic area across the country, providing coverage in virtually every geographic region of the United States.

The RECs are particularly designed to ensure that primary care clinicians who need help are provided with on-the-ground support for adoption and the meaningfully use of EHR systems. The goal of the program is to provide education, outreach and support services in order to help at least 100,000 primary care providers get to meaningful EHR use within two years (for more information, please visit: <http://healthit.hhs.gov/programs/rec>).

Under cooperative agreements of the HITECH Act, the RECs serve as independent resources to help you and your members contribute to the successful implementation of this essential, yet challenging program. **We would like to ask your help by collaborating with the RECs on the education and outreach of primary care providers.**

Representatives from the RECs are now available to support health care providers in your state or region with direct, individualized, and on-site technical assistance in:

- Selecting a certified EHR product that offers best value for the providers' needs;
- Achieving effective implementation of a certified EHR product;

- Enhancing clinical and administrative workflows to maximize the potential of an EHR system to improve quality and value of care; and
- Observing and complying with applicable legal, regulatory, professional, and ethical requirements to protect the integrity, privacy, and security of patients' health information.

Please take advantage of this valuable resource and arrange an introductory meeting with representatives from your corresponding REC. During the meeting, the RECs will present detailed information about their program and you will be able to brainstorm possibilities for collaboration on local education and outreach strategies and activities.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to you for your ongoing dedication to delivering the highest quality patient care and commitment to improving our health care system.

Sincerely,

Al Holloway
President & C.E.O.
TIPAAA
The IPA Association of America



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