



Center for Health Transformation E-Newsletters

If you are interested in receiving the Center for Health Transformation's E-Newsletter, please contact us at info@healthtransformation.net

August 2007

► In this issue:

- [Newt Notes](#)
- [Transforming Solutions](#)
- [CHT in the News](#)
- [Project Spotlight](#)
- [Members Update](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)

Newt Notes

The Census Bureau released a [new report](#) this week showing that the number of Americans without insurance rose to 47 million. This is an enormous anchor on our country going forward. It impacts not only the individuals and families who have to live in fear every day, but anyone who has insurance through higher premiums. This crisis is also a drag on our economy; it threatens our federal and state budgets and it makes us less competitive abroad.

As bad as the uninsured crisis is, it's only a symptom of the larger structural problem of rising healthcare costs. As in medicine, we must cure the disease, not just alleviate its symptoms. By driving down costs and making healthcare more affordable for every American, we can achieve 100% insurance coverage.

It is encouraging to see so many ideas put forth on transforming health, from presidential candidates to trade associations to governors. Just in the past week or so, Governor Romney released his [health reform proposal](#); Senator Clinton gave a [thought-provoking speech](#) on quality healthcare at Dartmouth; and a host

of states [took action](#) on a variety of fronts. We at the Center have tried to capture the most relevant information on all the leading ideas. [Click here](#) to get the latest.

There is one thing that all policymakers must keep in mind: We cannot afford to build upon a broken system. Trying to marginally improve the current system is akin to building a house on quicksand—it is doomed to fail. What we should focus on is creating an entirely new system. We should keep what is working today, eliminate what isn't, and incorporate new models wherever else.

In collaboration with our members, CHT is working on a series of ideas and proposals that will give every American the ability to purchase affordable health insurance. We can get to 100% coverage by fundamentally changing four central tenets: the way individuals view their health and healthcare; how culture and society influences individual behavior; the way we deliver care; and how health insurance and healthcare is financed.

Through bold changes that break with the current system, we can give every American the ability to purchase affordable health insurance. [David Merritt](#) and I published a piece in the [Des Moines Register](#) earlier this summer that outlines our proposal. We will release a more detailed plan later this fall.

[Back to Top](#)

Project Spotlight

Georgia e-Prescribing Project

According to the [Institute of Medicine](#), medication errors kill 7,000 Americans annually, injure 1.5 million citizens, and cost billions of dollars in emergency room visits and other complications. That translates to the equivalent of over 200 Georgians killed and more than 45,000 injured in Georgia each year due to medication errors.

A recent [survey](#) of physicians revealed some disturbing information

about e-prescribing. While physicians overwhelmingly believe that electronic prescribing would reduce medication errors (81%), would save time (65%), and would be a good idea for physicians (85%), only about one in ten actually use e-prescribing on a regular basis. Even more troublesome is that almost two out of three physicians (63%) say implementing an e-prescribing solution is not a priority for their office.

Georgia became the 49th state in the nation to allow the electronic transmission of prescription drug orders. Until September 2006, Georgia physicians could not order and pharmacists could not dispense medications pursuant to an electronic prescription.

One of the most effective solutions to medication errors is electronic prescribing, which has been proven to reduce such errors significantly. In January 2006, CHT hosted a Georgia E-Prescribing Summit. The goals of the summit were to:

- Help communicate the importance of building an electronic medical record which will result in a 21st Century Intelligent Health System which saves lives and saves money;
- Help bring together all of the affected stakeholders in an effort to accelerate the adoption of e-prescribing in Georgia;
- Help develop transformational strategies to achieve the vision of 100 percent e-prescribing in Georgia, and
- Create a Georgia e-Prescribing Working Group to address the challenges and opportunities associated with e-prescribing technologies.

The Georgia e-Prescribing Working Group has met several times since the summit. The Working Group has identified specific areas of focus including provider education, the development of incentives for providers to adopt HIT solutions, easy access to sources of high-speed technology, eliminating cost barriers for e-prescribing solutions, and identifying potential pilot project sites. The Working Group is developing strategies and solutions which will address these challenges.

The Georgia e-Prescribing Working is made up of representatives from the [Medical Association of Georgia](#) and several practicing

physicians, the [Georgia Academy of Family Practice](#), the [Georgia OB-GYN Society](#), [Allscripts](#), [GlaxoSmithKline](#), [Pfizer](#), chain and independent pharmacists, large employers such as the [Southern Company](#) and [AT&T](#), [Georgia Department of Community Health](#), [Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Georgia](#), [WellPoint](#), the Health Plans of Georgia, [SureScripts](#), [Morehouse School of Medicine](#) and state policy makers. This diverse group is dedicated to the development and implementation of solutions which will accelerate the widespread adoption of e-prescribing across Georgia.

For more information about the Georgia e-prescribing initiative, visit the [Advancement of Electronic Records, e-Prescribing and Connectivity](#) section on the [Georgia Project Page](#) of the CHT Web site or contact [Wayne Oliver](#) at woliver@gingrichgroup.com.

[Back to Top](#)

Transforming Solutions

In 2007, 27 states received Medicaid Transformation Grants under Section 6081 of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. The grants were rewarded to states that proposed innovative methods which in the end of the two years are designed to produce better health outcomes at lower cost.

The Center for Health Transformation is highlighting states on our [state map](#) that have received these Medicaid Transformation Grants, and will be following their progress for the next two years. In order for key decisionmakers and industry leaders from around the country to learn from others' successes, it is our intention to provide this resource in order to showcase innovative practices from across the nation. In the future, this site will be interactive, allowing program directors to submit updates and comments regarding their program.

New Mexico E-Prescribing Abstract

(edited for newsletter distribution)

Historically in New Mexico, health care practitioners have made

drug-prescribing decisions using minimal eligibility, medical, and treatment data, due primarily to a lack of accessibility to effective and functional information-sharing systems. The current prescribing process in New Mexico is in need of an improved technology designed to enhance prescribing efficiency, communicate prescribing decisions, and reduce prescribing error rates. Nationally, medical problems related to errors in prescribing are estimated to kill as many as 20,000 Americans annually, and affect many more because of adverse drug reactions.

The New Mexico Human Services Department, Medical Assistance Division is one of the recipients of a Medicaid Transformation Grant to develop the qualitative, technological and collaborative infrastructure needed to modernize the prescribing process in New Mexico. Grant funds will allow New Mexico to utilize new technology to develop electronic prescribing (or e-prescribing) networks. In summary, grant funds will be used to accomplish the following:

- Make technical modifications to New Mexico's Medicaid Management Information System, Medicaid Prescription Drug Claims System to enable e-prescribing capabilities;
- work in collaboration with key stakeholders to ensure that the needs of Medicaid providers, recipients and systems are represented in statewide e-prescribing initiatives; and
- educate and incentivize the involvement of Medicaid providers, including rural, non-profits, Federal Qualified Health Centers, and Native American tribal providers, in e-prescribing.

The goal of the proposed project is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Medicaid Program in the following ways: streamline operations and reduce Medicaid costs; promote generic drug dispensing, parallel to the enhancements being made in Medicare; reduce adverse drug events and medication errors by improving practitioner access to information; and promote practitioner and pharmacy participation and collaboration. The anticipated outcomes of the project are to achieve Medicaid cost-savings and efficiencies, and to improve patient safety by transforming New Mexico's prescribing process through technology

that will encourage and facilitate e-prescribing capabilities for Medicaid practitioners and pharmacists.

The continuing costs of this project after the grant funding period will be mainly for transaction and subscription fees that will be borne by providers. Once the initial technical changes have been made, ongoing costs to the Medicaid program will be minimal and can be sustained by the Human Services Department, Medical Assistance Division. *[Click here for the complete grant application](#)*

To view the state map, scroll to the bottom left-hand corner of CHT's homepage (www.healthtransformation.net). Important Note: In order to view the map, you must answer "Yes" when you are prompted to load Macromedia Flash. If you are not prompted and do not see the map on the lower left-hand corner of our CHT homepage, please visit <http://www.macromedia.com/software/flashplayer/> and click on "Get Flash Player 8." This is a free download.

[Back to Top](#)

Members Update

The Center for Health Transformation is pleased to recognize our newest premier member [Medical Justice Services, Inc.](#)

We are also pleased to recognize [American Hospital Association \(AHA\)](#) of America for renewing their membership at the premier level.

Please visit the [list of members](#) often to keep abreast of who is joining the Center, as well as the "[Member News](#)" page to learn about the awards or honors won by our members.

[Back to Top](#)

CHT in the News

CHT Called Tipping Point for Healthy Community Project in Georgia

On October 24, CHT will participate in the HealthSmart interactive health and wellness expo at the Georgia Mountains Center.

(AccessNorthGA)

CHT's Georgia Project Recognized as Leader in Transforming Diabetes Care

CHT's involvement in the Bridges to Excellence program has significantly impacted diabetes' patients and increased the number of physicians participating from 5 to 143. *(PR Newswire)*

12 States Lead the Way in HIT

CHT Project Director David Merritt says that Washington should learn from states' innovative efforts. *(Modern Healthcare)*

The Benefits of Shopping Around for Medical Coverage

CHT Project Director Wayne Oliver and CHT Senior Fellow Ron Bachman discuss how consumers can manage their healthcare costs. *(Savannah Morning News)*

Healthy Americans Mean A Healthy America

CHT Founder Newt Gingrich and Republican Presidential Candidate and Former Governor of Arkansas Mike Huckabee discuss the difference between a Washington-controlled bureaucratic model and a consumer-based system. *(Realclearpolitics)*

Health Bill Contains 'Hidden Tax Increase'

In a new op-ed, CHT Founder Newt Gingrich and Project Director David Merritt discuss how the House SCHIP bill will raise taxes on every senior citizen and every American who owns health insurance. *(The Atlanta Journal-Constitution)*

[Back to Top](#)

Upcoming Events

CHT CEO Nancy Desmond to serve as moderator at Governor Association's Healthy America Roundtable

Las Vegas, NV
September 6, 2007

Newt Gingrich to speak at [Arcapita's Southern Capital Conference](#)
Greensboro, GA
September 7, 2007

Newt Gingrich to speak to Kelly Services
Rochester, MI
September 12, 2007

Newt Gingrich to speak to [Inland Northwest Health Services](#)
Spokane, WA
September 13, 2007

CHT's "3rd Annual Creating a 21st Century Medicaid System"
Washington, DC
September 18, 2007

David Merritt to moderate a complimentary Siemens' webcast:
[Community Connectivity as a Strategy to Improve the Quality and Safety of Medical Care](#). September 19, 2007. 2:00pm

[Back to Top](#)
