



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

January 2006

► In this issue:

- Newt Notes
- Project Spotlight
- CHT in the News
- New Members
- Transforming Example
- Upcoming Events

Newt Notes

Preparing for the State of the Union

Every indication from the White House is that the President will focus very intently on the transformation of the health system as a major part of the Bush Administration agenda for 2006.

A variety of factors are defining the health policy issues of the 21st Century, including the rising cost of healthcare, the difficulties of coverage, the opportunity created by a market-oriented and consumer-driven model, the potential of health technology and the dangers of the avian flu. The President and his team have concluded that the combination of these forces come together to create an opportunity to really move the Nation and move the federal government in the direction of a much better health system that will, in fact, save lives and save money.

I think everybody who is interested in health transformation should watch carefully the President's State of the Union and afterwards re-read and pay particular attention to the parts that were focused on the health system. In addition, I believe the President will spend the next several weeks focusing on health opportunities around the country and seeking to prove to the news media – and through the news media, to the Congress – that there exist examples of real breakthroughs that make it possible for us to have a genuine transformation in the health system in the next year or two.

I want to note that recent developments occurring in the Florida health system and two online sites (<http://www.myfloridarx.com/> and <http://www.floridacomparecare.com/>) are important examples of the kind of transparency and accountability that is at the

heart of creating a market-based, consumer-driven health system. If you have not gone to look at these two sites, I strongly recommend it. I believe they will be adopted by virtually every state in the country in the next three to four years, and I believe it is very possible that CMS will adopt it for Medicare and Medicaid nationally as a model. Such a step will begin to bring vital price and quality information to every citizen, and that will lead to a very dramatic change in the health system.

I look forward to reporting to you the day after the State of the Union on what the President precisely does propose and how that will evolve in the Congress.* We very much look forward to working with you in the next year to make it a stunningly effective transformational year for health in America.

****CHT Member-Only Teleconference, 2/1/06 – Speaker Gingrich's response to the State of the Union (12:30 pm)***

CHT Founder Newt Gingrich will give his take on the President's State of the Union Address and what it means for health and healthcare. *(CHT Member-Only Teleconferences are reserved for Charter, Platinum, Premier and Associate Members)*

[Back to Top](#)

New Members

CHT would like to welcome its newest Associate member, [Enhanced Care Initiatives](#). We would also like to thank [1st Medical Network](#) and [Mount Sinai Medical Center](#) for renewing as Associate members.

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

[Back to Top](#)

Project Spotlight

CHT Launches Healthy Workforce and Retiree Project

As we begin a new year, the Center for Health Transformation is embarking on a new project, the Healthy Workforce and Retiree Project. With this endeavor, we embark upon a new set of challenges and opportunities, and we hope that our experience navigating this promising new area of focus within our health transformation efforts will lead to an acceleration of America's progress toward a 21st Century Intelligent Health System.

The 21st Century model of American business demands new solutions to familiar problems, such as how to manage retiree and worker health costs under an employer-

sponsored benefit plan. As the 20th Century drew to a close, Americans witnessed major corporations struggling not to collapse under the mounting pressure of financial commitments to generous benefit and retiree programs. As Americans live longer and healthcare costs continue to accelerate, the trajectory for such employer-sponsored benefit systems has clearly overwhelmed many businesses' ability to survive.

In order that America may effectively compete in the world market, American businesses and the American economy need better health outcomes and lower costs. While the vast majority of American employers are committed to providing the highest quality healthcare for their employees and retirees and the vast majority of health providers are morally committed to better outcomes, rising health costs are becoming increasingly difficult for our current system to manage. Government at every level is desperate to find new solutions to the rising cost of healthcare.

Businesses in the United States require new solutions to the challenge of caring for the health of their employees. CHT's Healthy Workforce and Retiree Project has been launched with the aim of helping employers achieve that vital goal of identifying better health/lower cost approaches for providing and delivering healthcare to employees and retirees.

CHT believes that properly harnessed, the combination of an explosion in new scientific and technological knowledge (we will have 4 to 7 times as much new knowledge from 2006 to 2030 as we had in the last quarter century) makes it possible for our health system to meet the demands of the 21st Century. The Center has partnered with key employers in this new project in order to streamline the momentum of health transformation within the American workforce; we intend to accomplish this by implementing transformational solutions within each member's workforce and helping to identify, create and drive transformational policies to reduce healthcare costs and improve the overall health of Americans.

[Back to Top](#)

Transforming Example

HSAs and Health Transformation – Putting Principles into Practice

The Center for Health Transformation is pleased to announce that beginning on January 1, the CHT team transitioned to a new health insurance plan with a health savings account (HSA) component.

In 2005, the Center made the rapid adoption of HSAs one of our top priorities, and we launched a Health Savings Account Project to coordinate activities in support of this priority. CHT is enthusiastic that the growing prevalence of HSAs in the health system will accelerate the transformation to a 21st Century Intelligent Health System – HSAs, enabled by information-rich support systems, make up one of the building blocks of a consumer-based model of healthcare.

Portable health savings accounts allow individuals to deposit money tax free, to grow money tax-free, and to withdraw that money tax-free to pay for qualified medical expenses, including preventive care, health insurance deductibles, health insurance premiums for retirees, prescription drugs and long-term care services (including long-term care insurance). As such, information-rich HSAs, which are owned by individuals, are the first completely tax-free account in American history.

With our newly incorporated HSA plan, we are proud to be taking this integral step toward making optimal health management a reality in our day-to-day activities. Recognizing that true transformation to a 21st Century Intelligent Health System is impossible without a serious commitment to consumer-driven and individually-empowered health choices, the CHT team will experience firsthand this vital tool for improving health quality and driving down unnecessary health expenditures.

Over the course of the next year, we hope to learn and widely share valuable lessons related to the functionality of these new tax-free methods of saving money for health expenses. For news on developments in this area, we encourage you to keep an eye on our [Health Savings Account Project](#) page.

[Back to Top](#)

CHT in the News

Building a Better Medicaid

CHT Project Director Jim Frogue advises the Medicaid Commission about how to bring healthcare into the 21st Century. (*Government Health IT*)

Jim Frogue Testifies to Medicaid Commission

Project Director Jim Frogue testifies before a meeting of the Medicaid Commission. *Read the testimony* (1/25/06)

Newt's Call to Arms

Cover story: Speaker Gingrich discusses how IT can transform government and the health sector in the January issue of *GovernmentVAR*.
([Read the article](#); [Listen to the VARBusiness podcast](#))

Gingrich Addresses Missouri Senate

CHT Founder Newt Gingrich encourages Missouri lawmakers to adopt a transformational approach to saving lives and saving money. (*Kansas City Star*; *Associated Press*; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*; *Jefferson City News-Tribune*)

Doctors Edge toward Electronic Records

CHT Project Director David Merritt offers creative approaches to accelerating the adoption of health IT. (*The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*)

A Tribute to Leadership

Newt Gingrich's transformational leadership skills are profiled in the *Washington Times*.
([Commentary by Arnold Beichman](#))

Planning for Disaster

CHT Project Director Robert Egge discusses pandemic planning for a possible avian flu outbreak. (*Health Care News*)

[Back to Top](#)

Upcoming Events

2/1/06 - CHT Member-Only Teleconference (12:30 pm Eastern)

CHT Founder Newt Gingrich, will give his take on the President's State of the Union Address and what it means for health and healthcare.

3/14/06 – CHT Member Meeting – Tallahassee, FL

Members will soon receive information regarding the member meeting. Please save the date and stay tuned for further details!

[Back to Top](#)
