

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

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California Receives \$2.75 Million to Advance Health Information Exchange for Emergency Medical Services

SACRAMENTO – Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, announced that California's Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) will receive a grant of \$2.75 million over two years to advance health information exchange (HIE) statewide during a disaster and regionally in daily emergency medical services (EMS).

California is one of 12 states to receive support through this \$29.6 million program, funded by the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act of 2009. The selected projects seek to expand the adoption of HIE technology, tools and services and increase the integration of health information in interoperable health IT to support care processes.

"This project will allow us to work through the obstacles and find the best solutions, which can then be implemented across the state," said Dr. Backer. "The benefits will be measurable, as we will have a system that will not only allow us to provide better patient care in the field, but will also collect data to track the impacts on the EMS system and patient outcomes."

The funds will be used to develop two health information technology projects over two years: 1) connectivity between existing health information organizations (HIOs) to support health care provider access to health records statewide during a disaster, and 2) technology and infrastructure to give EMS providers in the field access to send and receive critical patient information.

The grant will also fund an advisory committee consisting of public and private partners from HIE organizations, local EMS agencies, ambulance providers, hospitals and consumers as well as a robust education effort to ensure that the learning is shared.

Participants will address difficult policy considerations and interoperability issues between proprietary data systems, and develop cooperative agreements to make the greatest use of the health information infrastructure that now exists.

Anyone interested in following the progress of this project is invited to visit the website at www.emsa.ca.gov/HIE or contact the EMSA HIE in EMS Project Coordinator, June Iljana, at june.iljana@emsa.ca.gov, (916) 431-3723.

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