

**For Immediate Release
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New Web Site Provides West Virginians with Information on Electronic Health Records

CHARLESTON – A new online resource is available to help West Virginians understand electronic health records as many physicians and other health care providers switch over to them from traditional paper records.

The eHealthWV effort, which is funded by a federal grant to educate consumers about electronic health records, is now providing a variety of information about them at www.eHealthWV.org.

“The switchover to electronic health records among health care providers is still in its early stages in West Virginia, but we expect the pace to pick up in the next few years,” Patty Ruddick, project director of the West Virginia Health Information Security and Privacy Collaboration, said. “Our hope is to let West Virginians know how advantageous electronic health records and health information exchange systems are.”

The West Virginia effort is part of a national effort to educate consumers and providers about the importance of privacy and security in using electronic health records. The federal government has set a goal for most Americans to have electronic health records by 2014.

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“Electronic health records provide us with an important means to improve the quality of health care and the safety of patients,” Dr. Mark Stephens, a physician with the West Virginia Medical Institute and a practicing physician in Charleston, said. “It is imperative for consumers and providers to understand their benefits.”

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