

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: Bill Sorrells

PRESS

**Executive Director,
Alaska eHealth Network
Phone: (866) 966-9030 x5
E-mail: bill@ak-ehealth.org**

Good news for Alaska's healthcare providers...and all Alaskans

Certification helps Alaska health care providers meet "meaningful use" requirements

Alaska eHealth Network (AeHN) is pleased to announce that the technology being used for exchanging electronic health records throughout Alaska has been certified for "Meaningful Use" in July 2011 by the Federal Office of National Coordinator (ONC) for Healthcare Technology. As AeHN gears up to go live with its Alaska Health Information Exchange next month, the recognition promises a successful transition to a safer and secure healthcare system for all Alaskans.

"Orion Health's Rhapsody Integration Engine is the foundation of the Alaska Health Information Exchange and earning this certification from the ONC is a major step in helping Alaskan physician practices and hospitals realize safer and less costly healthcare for our families and communities." said AeHN Executive Director Bill Sorrells.

Health information exchange is the transmission of electronic healthcare-related data among health providers, labs, pharmacies, hospitals, health information organizations and government agencies according to national standards. The purpose of health information exchange development is to improve healthcare delivery, safety, and outcomes, through more and the efficient and complete communication of healthcare information.

The Alaska eHealth Network selected Orion Health to develop Alaska's Health Information Exchange. The certification of Orion Health's Rhapsody Integration Engine 4.1, the system chosen by AeHN designed to power Alaska's Health Information Exchange, helps Alaskan providers who have electronic health records meet the 2011/2012 criteria for "meaningful use," as approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Qualified physician practices and hospitals who can show "meaningful use" of their electronic health records system can be eligible for substantial financial incentives through the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

"Rhapsody 4.1 is the primary means within Alaska's health information exchange for health organizations to connect and share information safely and securely," said Sorrells. "This designation is one more example of the benefit of participation in Alaska's health information exchange by Alaska's health care providers."

Rhapsody 4.1, a design of Orion Health, Inc., received the designation in July by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology.

Rhapsody Integration Engine is the first dedicated healthcare integration engine to be both ONC certified and registered with the FDA as a Class I Medical Device (MDDS).

About Alaska's health information exchange

The Alaska eHealth Network was selected by the State of Alaska to develop and manage the state's health information exchange service. After a thorough due diligence process, Orion Health, Inc., was selected as the health information exchange vendor to provide the software and experience to facilitate the health information exchange. The service will be open to AeHN members in August.

An electronic health record and health information exchange have the potential to significantly improve the health status of Alaskans while at the same time reducing costs, improving safety and supporting research.

About Alaska eHealth Network

The Alaska eHealth Network is a 501 C(3) Alaska non-profit corporation, organized and managed by Alaskans. As a network of public and private organizations and businesses involved in healthcare, AeHN has been actively working on adoption of electronic health records and specifically on health information exchange activities since 2005.

Over the course of the last ten years, AeHN's predecessor organization, the Alaska Telehealth Advisory Council (ATAC, 1996-2005), and subsequently, AeHN and AeHN staff (2005-2010) have been actively engaged in the development of standardized health information exchange policies, procedures, participant agreements, provider agreements, data use agreements, and continued refinement of the business, technical and communications plan for health information exchange in Alaska. In addition, providers from across Alaska have been regularly engaged in ongoing forums, discussions and planning sessions for health information exchange through AeHN and AeHN's predecessor organization. AeHN was also selected to manage Alaska's Regional Extension Center, one of over 60 federally funded centers to assist providers with the adoption and meaningful use of electronic health records.

###