

Regional Health Records for Nebraska's Panhandle

The Vision

“...a compatible, shared, unified paperless system which has the capability to share patient information between hospitals and providers in real time.”

We envision a regional electronic health information exchange system that will enable providers, patients, and others to share information, communicate orders and results. Support evidence-based decision making, streamline public health disease surveillance and reporting, and enable data management for non-clinical purposes. Information will be patient centric. Transmission and access of information by authorized individuals will be through secure systems. Technology and connectivity options will continue to evolve. We intend to create a technology that will enable all partners with basic technological infrastructures to participate.

The Goal

From October 1, 2005 to September 24, 2008, collaborating Panhandle organizations will produce a viable and sustainable implementation of a **regional health record system**. The system will be designed to operate within established networks of rural hospitals, clinics, public health providers, behavioral health providers, other health and human services providers and consumers. Our first year priorities include establishing a RHIO, opening a Provider Portal, and a GPI recommendation.

The Partners

Project partners include the Rural Nebraska Healthcare Network (9 hospitals and rural health clinics), Panhandle Mental Health Center, Panhandle Community Services- Health Clinic, Western Community Health Resources, Panhandle Public Health District and the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center. We are located in the Panhandle of Western Nebraska, with 100,000 in population covering 60,000 square miles in frontier communities.

The Process

The implementation process will include representatives from organizational partners through teams (Steering, Implementation, Information Technology, Clinical, HIMS, Finance, Training, Public Relations and Evaluation), physician conferences, and stakeholder conferences and other meetings and processes.

The Regional Health Records implementation project will:

- Delineate a standards based, coherent, scalable and achievable technology solution,
- Work within existing collaborative and information channels to ensure scalability and extensibility to other key health care providers, such as bioterrorism, public health and other safety net providers.
- Articulate the value proposition for individual organizational partners, the critical access network and the regional community,
- Include all hospitals, health clinics and behavioral health providers within the regional critical access network,
- Include participation from all levels of leadership from all partners,

This implementation project was funded, in part, by grant #1UC1 HS016143-01 from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

For more information about the Regional Health Records Project, please contact Kim Woods, Project Manager, (308) 235-2313, woodsconsulting@actcom.net or www.comhealth.org