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## **Central Illinois Health Information Exchange volunteers recognized**

(Peoria, IL) -- Quality Quest for Health of Illinois awarded the Health Information Exchange Advisory Council the Q Award for their hard work in creating the Central Illinois Health Information Exchange (CIHIE).

The eight original co-chairs, representing four regional sub-groups, accepted the Q Award on behalf of the Council. They include: Jim Runyon, Easter Seals and Jim Schreiner, Graham Hospital (Peoria area); Frank Waterstraat, Illinois State University and Kathy Isaac, Dr. John Warner Hospital (Bloomington area); Awais Vaid, Champaign-Urbana Public Health Department and Diane Genthner, Provena Health (Champaign-Urbana area); and Dr. Michael Zia, Decatur Memorial Hospital and Dr. Maria Granzottoj, HSHS St. Mary's Hospital (Decatur area).

Health information exchange (HIE) enables different healthcare providers to securely share medical records through electronic networks, with patient permission. CIHIE will cover 20 counties in central Illinois, with the goal of ultimately being connected to a nationwide network.

CIHIE is now in a testing phase. Two years ago, Illinois ranked 49<sup>th</sup> among the states for readiness to implement HIE. CIHIE has since defied this assessment and central Illinois is now running at the head of the pack.

"This was a daunting task to think about launching this health information exchange by the end of this year. I think we are doing what others really struggle to do in this kind of timeframe," said Dr. Gail Amundson, President and CEO of Quality Quest for Health of Illinois. Quality Quest incubated CIHIE, which is now a separate non-profit.

The HIE Advisory Council deserves credit for driving the project forward quickly. The dedicated group of 30 volunteers helped foster collaboration and support among competing stakeholders, an aspect that makes the CIHIE project unique.

"This is a project that clearly involves the entire community. It requires the institutions to work together," said Dr. Michael Zia from Decatur Memorial Hospital.

"To have all the hospitals on the same page working together on this is really quite an accomplishment," said Jim Runyon, Director of Grants and Governmental Affairs at Easter Seals. "(The Q Award) really represents the investment of hundreds and hundreds of hours by countless volunteers."

(more)

Fueling the volunteers is a confidence that the sharing of electronic health records can greatly improve patient care at a time when the U.S. is taking an urgent look at health reform.

“HIE is a requirement. There was no way we could keep doing business as we do without having the electronic exchange of information,” said Awais Vaid, epidemiologist for the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District.

“All of us who are here and continue to be here are committed to it. We believe in it. And we think it is the best opportunity we have to make a difference in the lives of the people in our own community,” said Kathy Isaac, Risk Manager at Dr. John Warner Hospital in Clinton.

The CIHIE software, allcharts<sup>™</sup>, arranges the patient’s health history within an interface designed to enhance physician decision making. For example, physicians can take advantage of automatic alerts and reporting features to know when an important test is missing or when there’s a medication conflict. It is hoped that HIE will:

- Enhance the coordination of patient care among providers
- Reduce medical errors and duplicative services
- Improve healthcare quality and outcomes
- Reduce health disparities
- Reduce or eliminate paper
- Control the cost of healthcare

Patients can expect to hear more about allcharts<sup>™</sup> as the project moves closer to its official launch. After two years of planning, CIHIE is nearing delivery.

“It’s exciting. There are still some tough milestones to reach ahead, but we can see it inching forward in the progress that is being made,” said Dr. Maria Granzottoi from HSHS St. Mary's Hospital.

### **About the Q Award**

The Q Award is an annual award of the Quality Quest for Health of Illinois Board of Directors presented to an individual or group that advances the mission of Quest, which is achieving exceptional patient service and outcomes, building healthy communities, and promoting high value healthcare.

### **About Quality Quest for Health of Illinois**

Quality Quest for Health of Illinois is a non-profit healthcare collaborative working together to transform healthcare in our state. We bring physicians, hospitals, health plans, employers, patients, and families together to focus on creating healthier communities with better patient outcomes. We collect data related to specific Quest projects and report performance information to the medical community and the public. The information helps providers compare their performance to peers and regional / national benchmarks and gives consumers data to make informed healthcare decisions. For more information, visit <http://www.qualityquest.org/>. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), or [LinkedIn](#).

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