



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 24, 2007

Healthcare Leaders Convene for NCHICA 13th Annual Conference and Exhibition

Asheville, NC (September 24, 2007) -- The North Carolina Healthcare Information and Communications Alliance, Inc. (NCHICA), a nonprofit consortium that aims to improve health and care in North Carolina through health information technology (HIT) initiatives, kicks off its 13th Annual Conference and Exhibition today in Asheville, NC. The conference provides a unique opportunity for healthcare leaders to learn and exchange views on transforming the healthcare system through local, regional and national collaboration.

"We're at a point now where the real-life efforts of state forums such as NCHICA are pivotal in building national momentum toward the broad-scale adoption of HIT," said Robert M. Kolodner, MD, National Coordinator for Health Information Technology in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "These forums cultivate collective state activity and are invaluable in enabling healthcare communities to experience and analyze health IT from all perspectives."

The theme of this year's conference is "Cultures in Transition: Healthcare Consumers, Providers & Payers." In addition to hearing from Kolodner and Healthcare Information Technology Standards Panel (HITSP) Chair John Halamka, MD, attendees will gain insight on many of the most pressing issues impacting healthcare stakeholders, including standards, quality, privacy, security and interoperability.

"Quality and safety depend upon the sharing of healthcare data among providers, patients and payers," said Halamka. "Now is the time to build the community and regional infrastructure needed to enable secure health information exchange."

Conference attendees will share experiences and best practices during 28 breakout sessions and hear from more than 40 thought leaders from every healthcare stakeholder group. Additionally, Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise (IHE) will hold an interoperability demonstration of real-world information exchange across the care continuum.

"By creating a trusted environment that fosters open dialogue among all HIT stakeholders, the NCHICA conference brings differing perspectives together," said Holt Anderson, Executive Director of NCHICA. "We are proud that North Carolina has such a motivated healthcare community."

The conference will conclude on Wednesday, September 26.

About NCHICA

The North Carolina Healthcare Information and Communications Alliance, Inc. (NCHICA) is a nationally recognized nonprofit consortium that serves as an open, effective and neutral forum for health information technology (HIT) initiatives that improve health and care in North Carolina. Members include leading organizations in healthcare, research and information technology.

Working closely with its members, NCHICA has the unique ability to convene and form partnerships to advance HIT adoption. NCHICA's leadership in conducting demonstration projects, hosting educational sessions and fostering collective efforts within North Carolina helps position the state at the vanguard of national HIT acceleration efforts. NCHICA is located in Research Triangle Park, NC. For more information, please call (919) 558-9258 or visit www.NCHICA.org.

Media Contact:

Alyssa Willard
Alyssa@zarbconsulting.com
(919) 791-0012

###