



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**NHIN Progress Marks Milestone
in Advancement of HIE for North Carolina**

Early results of phase two of the US Department of Health and Human Services' Nationwide Health Information Network project establish the North Carolina Healthcare Information and Communications Alliance as a champion for expansion of health information exchange efforts at the state level.

Washington, DC (September 23, 2008) – The North Carolina Healthcare Information and Communications Alliance, Inc. (NCHICA) announces successful early results with today's demonstration of phase two of the Nationwide Health Information Network (NHIN) project. NCHICA is a nonprofit membership organization established in 1994 to improve health and care by accelerating the adoption of information technology and enabling policies. NCHICA intends to leverage the expertise gained throughout its NHIN collaboration among leading hospitals, physician practices and vendors to accelerate development of local and statewide health information exchange (HIE).

"NCHICA sees the direct correlation and practical application of its NHIN work for North Carolina residents and can leverage implementation and policy examples to ensure the state's HIEs are built on nationally-accepted, data-sharing standards," said Geoff Lawson, NCHICA Board Member and CIO of Morehead Memorial Hospital in Eden, NC. "NCHICA's members have built expertise throughout the project that will help ensure North Carolina has the policies, business cases and collaborations in place to support these exchanges."

During today's American Health Information Community (AHIC) webcast of real-time data exchange, NCHICA and its partners will demonstrate successful Trial Implementations of the *Wounded Warrior* and Social Security Administration's *Authorized Release of Information to a Trusted Entity* scenarios using test data.

"NCHICA's work with NHIN is providing insight and foundational value to HIE development in North Carolina," said David Dillehunt, CIO of FirstHealth of the Carolinas in Pinehurst, NC. "Working with others nationally, we have made significant progress on business plans, consent policies, data use agreements, deployment strategies and security considerations which should enable the robust development of all levels of HIEs. I believe this will give North Carolina a huge advantage in the adoption of best practices required to create a viable HIE."

As case in point, the *Wounded Warrior* scenario will demonstrate provision of coordinated care between disparate military and private systems. This is an issue of significant impact in North Carolina's care system given the state's significant military population. With the future benefit of secure and private data exchanged through the NHIN, which is framed on a standards-based protocol, clinicians from diverse healthcare organizations would be able to retrieve patient health records and make more informed medical decisions.

The NCHICA team includes the following healthcare providers: Carolina Neurosurgery and Spine Associates, FirstHealth of the Carolinas, Morehead Memorial Hospital, Pinehurst Surgical Clinic and Southern Pines Women's Health Center. IBM is providing project management methodology, architecture and the technical hosted solution for the North Carolina HIE. NCHICA is also receiving assistance from Allscripts, Apelon, CapMed PHR, eClinicalWorks, Greenway Medical Technologies, HIPAAT, Initiate, Interfaceware, LabCorp, MEDITECH, NextGen, NoMoreClipboard, Smith Moore Leatherwood and Williams Mullen.

NCHICA will be continuing its leadership in collaboration with leading North Carolina and national organizations.

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 W. Holt Anderson, Executive Director, at (919) 558-9258 or visit www.nchica.org.

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