



# Technology Solutions Update

3rd Quarter 2004

## Government Plans for Industry-wide EMR Implementation



In a recent news release, Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy G. Thompson announced a plan to move towards a 10-year goal of implementing electronic medical records across the health care industry. The plan

sets technology standards and provides financial incentives for doctors to invest in health care information technology.

“The trend towards paperless records systems is picking up speed,” said Brian Salzman, sales manager, MMIC Technology Solutions. “More physicians are beginning to realize cost savings, greater efficiency and improved patient safety than was possible with paper-based systems.”

The federal government has estimated that health information technology, including EMR, has the potential to produce savings of 10 percent of the total annual spending on health care. Much of this savings comes from reduced costs associated with producing, maintaining and storing paper files and documentation. An article in the August 4, 2004, issue of *USA Today* highlighted a hospital system in Illinois that was able to save \$500,000 in dictation and transcription alone. The administrator set a goal of about \$10 million in savings in the first year due to reduced data collection costs.

Electronic medical records can also reduce costly medical errors. Checks and balances built into the system can catch potential drug interactions between prescriptions, alert the physician when follow-up with a patient is required and suggest the appropriate codes based on the physician’s documentation.

To hear how electronic medical records can benefit your organization call MMIC Technology Solutions, 1-800-328-5532, or e-mail [TechnologySales@mmihc.com](mailto:TechnologySales@mmihc.com).

## Disaster Planning: Creating a Blueprint for Recovery

Fire, weather-related events, and even seemingly minor disruptions, such as power failures and broken water pipes, can interrupt normal business operations and put patient care and a health care organization’s financial security at risk. To head off the risk, many health care leaders are turning to disaster planning to plan, step-by-step, how their organization will continue business if disaster strikes.

“A health care organization should ask itself, what do I need to keep my business operating from day-to-day?” said Dave Kenady, MMIC Technology Solutions security and contingency consulting manager. “By detailed planning, organizations can mitigate the risks that could affect these key activities.”

Kenady says disaster planning is usually a two-stage process that includes business continuity and disaster recovery planning. Business continuity planning is developing guidelines for how employees will communicate with each other and with the public, where they will relocate and how they will continue seeing patients and doing



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## **Disaster Planning: Creating a Blueprint for Recovery** *(continued)*

their jobs during business interruptions. Disaster recovery outlines the steps that must be taken for an organization to recover its critical data.

Because every organization is unique, each group must define their disaster recovery. It can include such activities as patient visits, responding to patient emergency calls and creating or obtaining medical records. It then determines contact lists, communication channels and locations where critical information is stored (e.g., data applications, e-mail, files or electronic medical records).

The outcome is a blueprint to continue patient care and operations during business interruptions that reduces down time and limits financial loss.

To learn more about disaster planning call MMIC Technology Solutions, 1-800-328-5532, or e-mail [TechnologySales@mmihc.com](mailto:TechnologySales@mmihc.com).

## **Two MMIC Technology Solutions Employees Receive NextGen Certification**

Melissa Sporn, EPM training consultant, and Heather Remme, EMR training consultant, recently received certification on NextGen products. Melissa passed the Electronic Practice Management (EPM) test. Heather passed the Electronic Medical Records (EMR) test. She is the first person to have passed this difficult test since NextGen began offering it.

“Our trainers are MMIC’s NextGen clients’ expert source for information about their NextGen

systems,” said Karen Lang, product implementation manager. “NextGen certification is an important step to ensure that trainers understand the intricacies of the system and can implement that software according to clients’ needs.”

Other MMIC Technology Solutions staff who are NextGen certified are: Beth Schultz, project manager; Susan Fisher, EMR training consultant; Katie Sexe, EPM training consultant; and Karen Lang.