



# RHC Newsletter



Issue 24

February  
2009

## American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) H.R.1 Includes Provisions for Financial Incentives for EHR Systems

President Obama has said that he wants to see the implementation of Electronic Health Records. The new stimulus package includes specific language for it. The following captures some of the comments from Bill Finerfrock, Executive Director of NARHC through its list serve. Additionally, the EHR incentive was briefly mentioned during this week's CMS Open Door Forum for RHCs.

If the RHC is contemplating purchasing an EHR in the near future, there are several things to consider in addition to compatibility with RHC's unique billing rules.

Initial language in this piece of legislation directed federal agencies to establish new EHR certification standards that would allow different systems to "talk" with one another, i.e. interoperability. The financial incentives for using EHR would begin in 2011 and these certification standards would have to be in force prior to that time.

Incentives would include RHCs using an EHR whose patient population for Medicaid is at least 30%. If the RHC is part of a hospital, the RHC could benefit if the hospital is eligible for the incentive program.

This incentive program aims to encourage e-prescribing. Eventually the incentive reverts to a penalty program for not using a EHR system.

According to the AMA's overview of H.R. 1, eligible professionals in a rural health professional shortage area, would receive an increase of 10 percent for their incentive payment amount.

"Rural health clinics would benefit from incentives under the Medicaid program. Physicians cannot take advantage of the incentive payment programs under both the Medicare and Medicaid programs. Physicians (non-hospital based), with at least 30 percent Medicaid patient volume, could receive up to \$63,750, over a six-year period."

"Physicians who do not adopt/use a certified HIT system would face reduction in their Medicare fee schedule of -1% in 2015, -2% in 2016, and -3% in 2017 and beyond. E-prescribing penalties would sunset after 2014."

"The legislation allows HHS to increase penalties beginning in 2019, but penalties cannot exceed -5%. Exceptions would be made on a case-by-case basis for significant hardships (e.g., rural areas without sufficient Internet access)."

Sources:

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/legislation-advocacy/current-topics-advocacy/hr1-stimulus-summary.shtml>

<http://www.netdoc.com/Physician-Practice-Articles/General-Medical-Practice/Stimulus-package-and-EMR-use-by-physicians/>

## What's New?

### Indiana Rural Health Association's Website Is Remodeled

In a couple of weeks, there will be a very different looking website which will feature IRHA programs: Preparedness, RHCs, CAHs, IN State Rural Health Network, etc.

In an effort to stay in touch and limit the number of emails, the RHC newsletter will come twice a month with more content linked to the webpage where it will be stored and available for reference at a later date. Such resources will include the weekly CDC Updates. They will no longer be forwarded by email each week. There will be a link to them from the newsletter, and they will continue to be archived on the website.

The RHC page will include RHC documents for billing and regulatory issues, e.g. Indiana Operations Manual, CMS surveyors report, RHC manual chapters 9 and 13, RHC Federal Registry, How to start a RHC, etc.

On the preparedness page will be templates for infection control, standard operation guides, etc.

You will be able to register for training opportunities and conference online. Faxes are still welcome.

### Obama appoints New Administrator for HRSA

NRHA announced that Mary Wakefield, Ph.D., is the new administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

She is one of the nation's top experts on rural health and workforce

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### Dr. Lynn Bowers Recognized As A Patient Safety "Hero" by Indianapolis Patient Safety Coalition

Dr. Lynn Bowers, Director of Network Development at Henry County Hospital, is a winner of the 2008 Patient Safety Hero Awards sponsored by The Indianapolis Patient Safety Coalition.

### New HRSA appointment continued from pg. 1

issues. Dr. Wakefield, a long-time NRHA member, served on NRHA's Rural Health Congress and Government Affairs Committee. She is one of the associate deans for Rural Health at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

"We are obviously delighted with the selection of Dr. Wakefield to this vitally important position for rural America," said Alan Morgan, NRHA CEO. "Her experience as a nurse, a Ph.D. and a leading rural health care advocate make her uniquely qualified to lead HRSA as President Obama endeavors to expand access to the uninsured and underserved."

- **CMS Proposed Rule is Still on Hold.**
- **RAC** On 2/4/09 the stop work order was lifted for the Recovery Audit Contractor. [www.cms.hhs.gov/rac](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/rac)  
To ask a question: [RAC@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:RAC@cms.hhs.gov)
- **Spring Into Quality RHC- breakout sessions.** Come hear about an opportunity for placement of a TV to show preventive health topics, no cost, and commercial free. Every clinic is eligible.  
  
Advanced coding and cost reporting from Wipfli
- **RHC Constituency Call March 25**

Each region has a CMS coordinator for RHCs. Ours is **Region 5 (Chicago)** Christine Davidson [christine.davidson@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:christine.davidson@cms.hhs.gov) (312) 886-3642

We have asked her to participate in our monthly RHC constituency call March 25<sup>th</sup>. She has asked for us to send her questions in advance. Please send them to me, and I will pass them on to her. This will help her to focus on those particular interests or needs that you have.

### RHC preconference track

It is not too early to sign for IRHA summer conference. There will be a RHC track on June 9th at the Marriott East in Indianapolis. Topics being planned are:

- NP and PA roles in the RHC and scope of practice
- Billing and coding
- RHC Policy Manual (you are welcome to bring yours)
- RHC legislative updates
- The initial survey and resurveys



### Remembrances From Dr. Bowers' First Employee

by Charlet Bennett

Charlet Bennett was Dr. Bowers first employee. During her job interview more than 32 years ago, they discussed their families and then he left her with a binder on how to set up a physician practice which she

remembers being more than three inches thick. After telling her to read through it, he informed her he'd be back in about 15 minutes. Upon his return he asked her if she thought she could do that. "I said yes, and I could promise him that I would stay for five years," remembers Charlet. The rest as they say, is history."

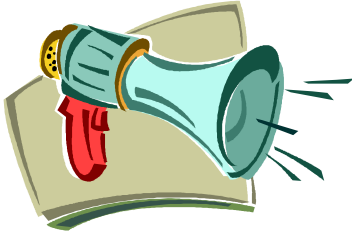
"He was the hometown boy returning to start up the first pediatrics practice and wanted everything to be perfect so we had a few practice runs. The furniture had yet to arrive so we used saw horses instead," Charlet recalls.

"Dr. Bowers also inspired establishing a pediatric Rural Health Clinic in New Castle in 2001. This designation means more access to providers. It allows us to never send a patient away based upon their ability to pay," explained Charlet.

"He is kind, funny and inspirational. It has never been about him, but what he can do for others. When you work with someone this long, they become family," she continues.

Dr. Bowers grew up in New Castle and came back home after his service in the US Army. Known for his sense of humor, he is also an avid gardener and gourmet cook. He and his wife Cassie have three children and seven grandchildren.





## PREPAREDNESS: EMERGENCY RESPONSE VOLUNTEERS WANTED !!!

Submitted by ISDH

No one knows exactly when or where a disaster or health emergency will strike. Emergencies and disasters come in many forms whether caused by natural events; such as earthquakes, storms, fires and floods; disease outbreaks such as influenza; accidents such as chemical spills; or bio-intentional means such as a release of a virus or serum gas. These are events we may very well experience in our lifetime. Most of the time, we cannot predict or control these events. However, there is something we can do! We can prepare for them!

**You** can become a strong link in the Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response Division within your county in Indiana. The mission is to help equip each Indiana district in building a stronger and more stable foundation of support in the case of a declared public health emergency or disaster. We need people to come together in their community. No experience necessary. We are seeking medical and non-medical volunteers to work at their county's site if needed.

Why should you volunteer? In a declared public health emergency, vaccines are ordered and distributed. If you are an "ERV" (Emergency Response Volunteer), then you and your household will be guaranteed first dosages of the available vaccines. Most of the volunteer training is on-the-job training (at the site) during a declared emergency. If you are interested, please reply to the contact information below.

"WE CAN ALL, EVERY SINGLE ONE OF US, WE CAN ALL BE EXTRAORDINARY,  
TO BE EXTRAORDINARY IS SIMPLE, IT JUST REQUIRES AN ORDINARY PERSON  
DOING SOMETHING EXTRA"

| District | Volunteer Coordinator | Phone        | email  |
|----------|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| 1        | Claudia Rhye          | 219-663-0487 | <a href="mailto:crhye@isdh.in.gov">crhye@isdh.in.gov</a>         |
| 2        | David Norris          | 574-234-0155 | <a href="mailto:dnorris@isdh.in.gov">dnorris@isdh.in.gov</a>     |
| 3        | Deborah Holbrook      | 260-436-0162 | <a href="mailto:dholbrook@isdh.in.gov">dholbrook@isdh.in.gov</a> |
| 4        | Melissa Walton        | 765-447-2527 | <a href="mailto:mwalton@isdh.in.gov">mwalton@isdh.in.gov</a>     |
| 5        | Mary Bull             | 317-575-6591 | <a href="mailto:mbull@isdh.in.gov">mbull@isdh.in.gov</a>         |
| 6        | Jennifer Getz         | 765-287-9772 | <a href="mailto:jgetz@isdh.in.gov">jgetz@isdh.in.gov</a>         |
| 7        | Annie Taylor          | 812-299-4692 | <a href="mailto:anntaylor@isdh.in.gov">anntaylor@isdh.in.gov</a> |
| 8        | Barbie Jenkins        | 812-330-2364 | <a href="mailto:bjenkins@isdh.in.gov">bjenkins@isdh.in.gov</a>   |
| 9        | Jane Hubbard          | 812-288-8163 | <a href="mailto:jhubbard@isdh.in.gov">jhubbard@isdh.in.gov</a>   |
| 10       | Zac Jones             | 812-474-7461 | <a href="mailto:zacjones@isdh.in.gov">zacjones@isdh.in.gov</a>   |

If interested in being a volunteer, please contact the following Volunteer Coordinator in your District to find out how to be ready to help in your community. Rural communities will need assistance from both administrative staff and health care professionals from the RHCs. Please call to become an emergency health volunteer today.

## Indiana Rural Health Association

1024 South 6th St., Suite 202  
Terre Haute, IN 47807

Phone 812-478-3919  
Fax 812-232-8602

### Upcoming Events

**March 3, 2009**  
**1:00 PM - 2:00 PM ET**

#### COCA Conference Call: Investigating Respiratory Disease Outbreaks

CME, CNE, CEU, CHES available !!  
TITLE: Investigating Respiratory Disease Outbreaks: An integrated approach to investigations, specimen collection, and pathogen identification

Call-in number: 888-942-9712  
Passcode: 4863122

PowerPoint Presentation available by March 3rd: <http://www.emergency.cdc.gov/cocal/information.asp>

**March 8-10**

**NARHC Spring Institute**  
San Antonio, Texas  
<http://www.narhc.org/events/events.php>

**March 24**

**IRHA Spring Into Quality**  
To include RHC breakout sessions. Plainfield, IN

**March 24-25**

**WIPFLI 16th Annual Rural Health Clinic Forum**  
Green Bay WI  
[www.wipfli.com/event/RHC](http://www.wipfli.com/event/RHC)

**June 9-11**

**IRHA Annual Conference**  
RHC preconference June 9  
Marriott East Indianapolis

## SPRING INTO QUALITY

### Symposium for Rural Health Care Providers

**Tuesday, March 24, 2009**

Primo West Banquet & Conference Center, 2353 Hadley Road, Plainfield, IN

8:00 a.m.- 8:30 a.m. **Registration and Breakfast with Exhibitors**

8:30 a.m.- 8:45 a.m. **Welcome**

*Susan Gofourth, Critical Access Program Coordinator, IRHA*

8:45 a.m.- 10:15 a.m. **Accountability: Turn Resources into Results**

*Liz Jazwiec, RN, BSN, Founder & CEO, Liz, Inc.*

10:15 a.m.- 10:30 a.m. **Break-Networking with Exhibitors**

10:30 a.m.- 11:30 a.m. **Transformational Leadership for Safety**

*Betsy Lee, RN, MSPH, Director of Patient Safety Center, Indiana Hospital Association (IHA)*

11:30 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. **Lunch-Networking with Exhibitors**

12:15 p.m.- 12:45 p.m. **Scavenger Hunt with Exhibitors**

**\$100 CASH PRIZE!!**

**Afternoon Breakout Sessions**

| Hospitals   | Rural Health Clinics  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>12:45 p.m.-2:45 p.m.</b><br/><b>Implementation of Electronic Medical Record in Health Care The Challenges and Rewards (FLEX CAH Health Information Technology Grant)</b><br/><i>Joyce Beck, MHA, CEO, Thayer County Health Services, Hebron, NE</i></p> | <p>12:45—1:45 <b>Public Health Television</b><br/><i>Bryon Carmody, President &amp; CEO, Public Health Television (No CE Credits for this session )</i></p> |
| <p><b>Break</b></p>   | <p><b>1:45 p.m.- 2:45 p.m.</b><br/><b>Advanced Billing and Coding</b><br/><i>Jeff Johnson, CPA, Wipfli, LLP</i></p>   |
| <p><b>3:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.</b><br/><b>Abstraction Validation Training for National Specifications Manual 2.5</b><br/><i>Beth Greenberg, Technologist, Health Care Excel (HCE)</i></p>   | <p><b>Break</b></p>   |
|   | <p><b>3:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.</b><br/><b>Advanced Cost Reporting</b><br/><i>Jeff Johnson, CPA, Wipfli, LLP</i></p>   |

**4:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.**

**Closing, Evaluation, and \$100 Cash Prize Awarded**