

Coordinating health & health care
for a thriving Kansas



February 25, 2009

Dear Members of the E-Health Advisory Council, Medical Home Working Group, and Telemedicine/Telehealth Working Group:

As many of you are aware, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) or “federal stimulus package” was recently signed into law by President Obama. Included in ARRA are several health related provisions that will have an impact on patients, providers, and purchasers in Kansas. Although a significant amount of the funding flows directly into specific programs (such as Medicaid – with an increased amount of federal matching funds), there are also some competitive funding opportunities, particularly for Health Information Technology (HIT) and Exchange (HIE). Because the development of a medical home model can also benefit from increased use of and funding for HIT and HIE, the new ARRA law can also help to promote and provide resources for creating a medical home health delivery model for Kansas.

As I mentioned to the E-health Advisory Committee and the Medical Home Working Group, these new resources provide Kansas with a tremendous opportunity to build on the work that many of you have participated in over the past few years. Indeed, Kansas is well positioned to craft a “Kansas ARRA HIT/E Plan” that can be used as the beginning of a grant proposal to leverage the ARRA HIT/HIE funding – with the goal of improving care coordinate and health outcomes in Kansas. We will learn more about applying for the ARRA funding in the coming weeks. However, we believe that time to begin working on our Kansas ARRA HIT/E plan is now.

Lieutenant Governor Mark Parkinson has assembled a group of state leaders to plan for ARRA’s implementation in Kansas, of which I am a member. He has asked members of the Cabinet and other state leaders to strategize about how Kansas can compete for these federal funds. Governor Sebelius has also created a website to share information about ARRA opportunities in Kansas: <http://www.governor.ks.gov/recovery/>. The KHPA through the E-health Advisory Council and under the direction of the Lieutenant Governor and Governor will be leading the initiative to obtain federal funding for HIT/HIE. I have asked the Cabinet Secretaries in the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) and the Kansas Department of Aging (KDOA) to provide me with their list of “shovel ready” projects that may qualify for ARRA funding consistent with our overall goals. The Health Information Security and Privacy Collaborative (HISPC) has “shovel ready” projects as well. Other stakeholders may also have additional projects in mind. The extent to which these projects can lead to the development of a medical home, the better we will be able to synergize the health policy priorities of our state. **Our goal is to use the ARRA dollars to advance health care coordination in the state, and improve health outcomes.**

Rm. 900-N, Landon Building, 900 SW Jackson Street, Topeka, KS 66612-1220

www.khpa.ks.gov

Medicaid and HealthWave:

Phone: 785-296-3981
Fax: 785-296-4813

State Employee Health Plan:

Phone: 785-368-6361
Fax: 785-368-7180

State Self Insurance Fund:

Phone: 785-296-2364
Fax: 785-296-6995

The KHPA will be convening a steering committee of interested agencies and stakeholders to begin to craft the Kansas ARRA HIT/E plan over the next two weeks. This group will need to work quickly to pull together existing documents and resources and determine how these align with federal requirements for ARRA funding. If you are interested in being a member of the steering committee, I ask that you are able to commit to several hours of work each week as we pull together the plan. In the meantime, the Medical Home working group will reconvene to discuss principles and next steps on March 11th. The next E-health Advisory Council meeting is being scheduled. When we reconvene, we will hear more about HIT/E state and federal law harmonization efforts from the HISPC legal team and also discuss next steps.

Attached to this email are several documents that will provide you with some information about how ARRA will impact Kansas (see ARRA Fact Sheet). Other documents include a slide presentation to the House Vision 2020 Committee regarding the intersection between HIT/HIE, a short paper on the Medical Home in Kansas, a primer on telemedicine/telehealth, and a draft bill resolution developed by the HISPC team (HISPC has asked for feedback on promoting this resolution yet this session). Although a number of you are working on several of these different initiatives, some of you receiving this email may not be familiar with the work of your colleagues. As we continue to learn more about details about ARRA, my staff – Debbie Huske and Barb Langner – will be sending to you additional information (mostly as background information). I invite you to use this e-mail list as a “list-serve” so that you too can provide information and feedback to your colleagues. Please also forward this list to interested others. This list-serve will be used to keep you apprised of the steering committee’s work. In addition, we plan to post to our website (under the HIT/HIE tab) these attached documents and other resources as they become available.

Finally, the KHPA together with the HISPC project will soon be announcing the date and place for an All Stakeholders meeting to discuss Kansas’ opportunities for ARRA funding before the end of March. Stay tuned and we hope you can join us. <http://www2.kumc.edu/healthinformatics/>

All the best,
Dr. Marci Nielsen, KHPA Executive Director