



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
1 Ashburton Place, 11th Floor
Boston, MA 02108*

DEVAL L. PATRICK
Governor

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

JUDYANN BIGBY, M.D.
Secretary

Tel.: 617-573-1600
Fax: 617-573-1890
www.mass.gov/eohhs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 7, 2010

CONTACT: Paulette Song, 617-573-1610
paulette.song@state.ma.us

**PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION FURTHERS INNOVATION IN HEALTH
TECHNOLOGY WITH NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

*U.S. Health & Human Services Secretary Sebelius and other state officials will meet on ways to
implement improved health information technology*

BOSTON--Governor Deval Patrick today announced that the Patrick-Murray Administration will host a national Health Information Technology (HIT) conference at the Westin Waterfront Hotel in Boston, April 29-30, 2010. As one of the nation's only governors to advance the improvement and use of information technology as a direct link to improving health care delivery, Governor Patrick will provide the opening plenary address for the conference, "Health Information Technology: Creating Jobs, Reducing Costs, and Improving Quality."

"We are at a critical point for making great strides in improving care while also investing in programs that cut costs and advance economic recovery efforts," said Governor Patrick. "Massachusetts continues to lead the way in leveraging health IT as part of health care reform. This conference brings together thought leaders in the field so strategies can be implemented on a much grander scale."

U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius will provide the keynote address on April 29. The two-day event will give local business leaders the opportunity to meet with federal and state officials to discuss strategies for effectively implementing HIT that will improve patient care and strengthen the economy. In addition to Secretary Sebelius, National Coordinator for HIT, Dr. David Blumenthal, will address conference attendees.

The Patrick-Murray Administration is partnering with the Massachusetts eHealth Institute (MeHI), a division of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, to host this conference. In addition to Secretary Sebelius and Dr. Blumenthal, Governor Patrick has invited officials from all 50 states to participate, including governors, state health secretaries, Medicaid directors, HIT coordinators and legislative leaders.

"Health IT is critical to making health care more efficient, reducing costs and improving access to quality, affordable care," said Secretary Sebelius. "This important technology will help providers reduce paperwork, improve accuracy and spend more time with patients so we can move our health care system into the 21st century."

- more -

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION FURTHERS INNOVATION IN HEALTH TECHNOLOGY WITH NATIONAL CONFERENCE (cont'd. p.2/2)

"This conference is an important vehicle for building private-public partnerships to ensure the most effective use of HIT for furthering health care," said Massachusetts Secretary of Health and Human Services Dr. JudyAnn Bigby. "This conference will allow participants to learn from the ground-breaking work of Massachusetts leaders."

Massachusetts has received \$24 million in federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grants to support HIT initiatives throughout the state. U.S. Health and Human Services estimates that investing in and strengthening the nation's HIT infrastructure will lead to the creation of 40,000 jobs nationwide.

"Technology is the key to improving the delivery, quality and cost-effectiveness of health care and continuing to modernize Massachusetts' health care system. It's a win-win that's keeping patients safer and healthier, creating jobs, and keeping costs under control," said Senator John Kerry.

"Thanks to the leadership of Governor Patrick, Massachusetts is convening the brightest stars in health care technology in Boston," said Rick Shoup, Director of the Massachusetts e-Health Institute. "The Commonwealth is a global hub of innovation in health technologies, and we look forward to working with other state leaders to implement these life-saving technologies across the country."

"I welcome Secretary Sebelius to the Commonwealth where we have been focusing our efforts and federal Recovery Act funding on Health Information Technology initiatives. Her perspective will be a great addition. The use of Health Information Technology to improve patient care and our economy has been embraced in the sixth district, and the Commonwealth's leadership is appreciated," said Congressman John F. Tierney.

"Certainly, improvements in Health Information Technology will enable us to better marshal our limited resources and reduce medical errors," said Congressman Stephen Lynch. "I think Governor Patrick is properly focused on this and he should be commended for hosting this conference."

"Connecting patients, providers and payers with information technology is the foundation of meaningful use, and this conference will help build those critical connections," said Dr. John Halamka, Chief Information Officer of Harvard Medical School and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. "Our country and our states are encouraging universal adoption of electronic health records by clinicians, personal health records by patients, and community healthcare information exchange among all stakeholders, improving quality, reducing cost, and ensuring the right patient centered care at the right time."

About MeHI

The Massachusetts e-Health Institute (MeHI) was established within the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) under Chapter 305 of the Acts of 2008 to promote the implementation of electronic medical records systems in every provider setting as part of a statewide, interoperable health information exchange, and to support the advancement of other advanced technologies that both improve quality and reduce costs in the health care system. Established with \$15 million in initial funding from state sources, MeHI is charged with convening a broad based collaborative of all stakeholders to support its mission. Under the leadership of Secretary Bigby, MeHI and the Health Information Technology Council have the responsibility of developing plans and a framework for making Massachusetts eligible for the maximum amount of near-term funding available through the federal HITECH Act. For more information, visit: www.maehi.org.