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Physician E-Prescribing Pilot Shows Success; Phase 2 Participants Sought

The first phase of the New Mexico Prescription Improvement Coalition's (NMPIC's) electronic prescribing (e-prescribing) pilot project has shown success both in numbers of active e-prescribers and reporting of various data by pilot participants. To date, a total of 57 participants are actively using their e-prescribing solutions, and NMPIC is in the process of evaluating return on investment data. Additionally, participants are tracking and reporting data on patient eligibility, medication history, drug utilization, drug-to-drug interactions, prevented/reversed prescriptions as a result of drug alerts, and dispensing errors detected by the e-prescribing solution.

This project involves more than 100 physicians practicing in 19 communities* throughout the state, serving both urban and rural areas. This project works to promote the adoption of e-prescribing to enhance medication management and patient safety in participating locations.

Sponsoring organizations are Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico, Lovelace Health Plan, Molina Healthcare of New Mexico, the New Mexico Human Services Department Medical Assistance Division (Medicaid), Presbyterian Health Plan, and United HealthCare Insurance Company.

NMPIC identified about 240 physicians who expressed interest in participating through a needs assessment conducted last year. DrFirst, RxNT and OA Systems are participating vendors. Physician participants are working with the selected vendors to implement their e-prescribing software and receive the necessary training.

Kristine McCoy, MD, associate medical director for El Centro Family Health, Westside, who practices at the Peñasco Medical Clinic, reports that she is using e-prescribing with almost every patient. "E-prescribing is particularly helpful in improving accuracy – both in terms of avoiding mistakes I might make and also in pharmacists' interpreting prescriptions. I know it's accurate without having to double-check everything."

McCoy acknowledges that the practice made a substantial time investment at implementation, but adds, "Now that we're up and running, refills are much easier and more time efficient."

Based on the success of this project's first phase, NMPIC has announced a second phase, which officially began July 1. NMPIC will reimburse eligible participating physicians up to \$1,000 for qualified expenditures in the adoption of e-prescribing and will continue until funding is exhausted. For more information on or to participate in the e-prescribing project, contact Galina Priloutska, manager for drug safety at the New Mexico Medical Review Association, at gpriloutska@nmmra.org.

NMPIC is a group effort aimed at reducing the negative health effects associated with inappropriate drug treatment in Medicare beneficiaries and serves New Mexico's community interest through education, clinical guidelines for appropriate treatment of people with chronic disease and drug utilization. The New Mexico Medical Review Association (NMMRA), the facilitator for NMPIC, is a not-for-profit, physician-sponsored organization that is New Mexico's federally contracted Medicare Quality Improvement Organization and External Quality Review Organization for Medicaid and works with health care providers, consumer and health care organizations, and state and federal agencies to improve the quality of health care in New Mexico.

***Participating Communities:** Albuquerque, Anton Chico, Carlsbad, Chama, Clayton, Coyote, Embudo, Española, Farmington, Hobbs, Las Vegas, Los Alamos, Peñasco, Ribera, Roswell, Roy, Springer, Truchas, Wagon Mound

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