

Welcome to **What's New in e-Health**. This e-mail newsletter is designed to inform, educate, and update you on e-Health initiatives and activities in Ontario, and beyond. It is intended as a quick reference and should take you only a few minutes to read. Contact details for the newsletter are provided at the end of this edition.

e-HEALTH IN FOCUS

In this **e-Health in Focus** section of **What's New in e-Health**, we'll explore the ground covered by the term 'e-Health'. You'll find information on different aspects of e-Health, ways to get involved, and details of the e-Health strategy Ontario is pursuing.

"Collaboratory" to Help with Front-Line Adoption of e-Health Tools and Applications

Canada Health Infoway, in partnership with the Centre for Global eHealth Innovation, recently announced the start of a groundbreaking, Ontario-based project that will benefit patients and health providers.

The new "eHealth Collaboratory", located within the Centre for Global eHealth Innovation's facilities at the University Health Network, is equipped with state-of-the-art labs and demonstration facilities. Using sophisticated telecommunications and communication infrastructure, Collaboratory experts work to create environments that simulate real-life settings, such as the physician's office, clinic, hospital room and home. They will also be able to test e-Health tools and applications' "interoperability" - which means how easily information can be shared between one organization's computer systems and another's.

"The eHealth Collaboratory is a simulator of the future, where vendors, clinicians, technology experts, policy makers and the public can work together to find innovative ways to improve people's health through information and communication technologies," said Dr. Alex Jadad, Director of the Centre for Global eHealth Innovation, at the launch of the Collaboratory.

The "Collaboratory" creates physical and virtual environments that help health care professionals use and improve shareable electronic health records. Electronic health record vendors can come to the Collaboratory to see how easy it is to use their products, and get an assessment of how "interoperable" their products are. Provincial e-Health initiatives looking to assess a potential Electronic Health Record solution can work with the Collaboratory to test how well the solution meets their specifications.

For more information about the Collaboratory, see their web site at www.ehealthcollaboratory.ca

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PEOPLE AND PROGRESS

*In this **People and Progress** section of **What's New in e-Health**, you'll find information on a particular e-Health initiative that has recently reached a milestone. By reading regularly about the progress of particular initiatives, and the people involved, you will find the concept of 'e-Health' coming to life.*

London Area e-Health Projects Winning Awards

The London Hospitals' Electronic Patient Record (EPR) was selected as a Merit Award Winner in the **Working Together** category at the 2005 Ontario Public Service Showcase Ontario Awards of Excellence. It was also recently announced that the Thames Valley Hospital Planning Partnership's Diagnostic Imaging and Picture Archiving Communications Systems project has won a Canadian Information Productivity Award that will be formally presented at a banquet on November 1, 2005.

These are just two of five projects underway in Southwestern Ontario's Connecting the Continuum of Care initiative. This initiative is also developing an EPR among the eight hospitals of the Thames Valley Hospital Planning Partnership.

"We are helping people understand how Southwestern Ontario hospitals are electronically integrating clinical information to improve our health care system," says Diane Beattie, CIO of Information Management at London Health Sciences Centre and St. Joseph's Health Care, London.

The EPR is a comprehensive electronic record of patients' episodic events and allows the transmission of physicians' orders and test results to be shared across multiple sites in participating locations in the London area.

It is anticipated that the EPR will result in significant reductions in medication errors and unnecessary and duplicate testing, which in turn will contribute to increased levels of efficiency.

The development of a provincial EHR is a cornerstone of the provincial e-Health strategy and the London EPR is the result of a Transfer Payment Agreement between the London Hospitals and the Ontario Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

The Diagnostic Imaging and Picture Archiving and Communications System project allows eight hospitals to capture, store, and share images such as x-rays and CT scans. As soon as an image is taken, it becomes available via computer to patients, doctors, and remote specialists.

The project, which was launched in early 2004, is just the beginning of a shared diagnostic imaging initiative that will link 22 hospitals in Southwestern Ontario at 38 different sites.

Congratulations to the London Hospitals for these prestigious awards!

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WHAT'S NEW

*In this **What's New** section of **What's New in e-Health**, you'll find the key updates since the last edition of the newsletter. Each item will provide a contact name and number to make it easy to follow-up on a specific topic.*

e-Health Leaders' Forum to Meet in Ottawa October 20th - Please mark your calendar for the next e-Health Leaders Forum, which will be Thursday, October 20th. Greg Forestell of the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario has kindly offered to host the meeting. For more information, please contact **Vinna Vong** in the e-Health Office at 416-314-7332 or vinna.vong@moh.gov.on.ca. Alternatively, you can contact **Nancy Ferguson in Greg Forestell's office** at 613-737-7600 Ext. 3273 or nferguson@cheo.on.ca.

e-Health Focus of Session at the Ontario Hospital Association's *HealthAchieve 2005* - For those attending the Ontario Hospital Association's HealthAchieve 2005, note that there will be session dedicated to "Building the Infrastructure" of e-Health on Monday, October 31, 2005 from 1:30PM to 4:30PM. The session will be Chaired by Sam Marafioti, Vice-Chair of the Hospital e-Health Council. Speakers and panelists include Sam Miller, Chief Information Officer at the University of Arizona Medical Centre, and Roger Girard, Ontario's Chief e-Health Strategist. Contact **Carol McFarlane** at 416-205-1438 or cmcfarlane@oha.com for more information.

NORTH Network Success Lauded by Cisco Systems - In the September 12th edition of *The New Yorker* magazine, Cisco Systems placed a full-page ad trumpeting the tremendous success of one of Ontario's telehealth (or telemedicine) networks. The ad applauded the connection of patients to specialists in urban centres. Congratulations to the NORTH Network - and to all three of Ontario's telehealth networks - for their achievement of nearly 25,000 "events" in 2004/2005, which is twice what was achieved the year before.

What's New in e-Health is produced by the e-Health Office in the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. To subscribe to the newsletter, please send an e-mail to: ehealthOffice@moh.gov.on.ca 'Subscribe' in the Subject Line. We welcome your comments, and ask that you send them to: eHealthOffice@moh.gov.on.ca

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