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**Statewide Health Information Exchange System To Launch  
In 23 Orange County Emergency Departments**

*Collaboration Between CalRHIO and OCPRHIO Demonstrates How Health Information Exchange Can Progress in California and Meet President Obama's Goals*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – February 18, 2009 -- A statewide system to provide physicians with secure electronic access to critical patient information is set to launch in 23 Orange County emergency departments. The health information exchange initiative (HIE) is a collaboration between the statewide California Regional Health Information Organization (CalRHIO) and the Orange County Partnership Regional Health Information Organization (OCPRHIO). Initially it will provide emergency department physicians with medical record information on 360,000 patients enrolled in CalOptima, which provides coverage for people in Medi-Cal, Medicare, and Healthy Kids. The system is slated to go live by July 2009. Health information exchange (HIE) is a major piece of the Obama Administration's stimulus package.

"This initiative is the first step in making comprehensive information available electronically for all Californians," said Molly Coye, MD, MPH, CalRHIO Board Chair. "It demonstrates the benefits that can be achieved when state-level and local efforts work together. The Orange County community, in supporting OCPRHIO, is leading the way.

Together we will improve patient care and safety, and expedite the timeline for electronic exchange of health information.”

“Our hospitals and physicians continue to demand electronic access to health information that this collaboration makes possible,” said Nova Stewart, OCPRHIO Chair and Chief Information Officer of Integrated Healthcare Holdings, Inc. “Having medical record information available is especially critical in an emergency when seconds count and a patient may not be able to tell the physician the vital facts about his or her health, such as medications or a chronic condition.”

By leveraging CalRHIO’s technology platform, OCPRHIO does not incur the time and expense of building its own data exchange system. It is also assured that Orange County physicians will be able to communicate with other doctors and hospitals across the state, as well as the national network when it is available.

By early 2010, the CalRHIO system will provide additional data to emergency physicians including medical history, laboratory data, and clinical claims data for patients with commercial insurance. Use of the health information is restricted to patient care and is protected and exchanged under strict medical privacy and confidentiality regulations.

The new system augments information currently available to Orange County emergency department physicians who care for the county’s indigent population. The information is part of the Medical Services Initiative Program, a county funded safety net program.

“Collaboration in facilitating HIE is essential for success,” said Katherine Johnson, Director of Program Development, Public Health Foundation Enterprises, the fiscal sponsor for the OCPRHIO project. “When organizations and individuals are able to put aside their differences and work collectively for the common good of improved health care for a community, profound changes are possible. The Orange County health care community continues to illustrate its ability to work together for the good of its citizens, making organizations like OCPRHIO an exciting success. We are proud to be a part of it.”

#### About CalRHIO

CalRHIO is a nonprofit, public-private partnership that contracts to provide technology and data to local providers throughout the state. Its mission is to improve the safety, quality, and efficiency of health care through the secure electronic exchange of critical patient information. Its goal is to ensure that within the next decade any authorized provider in California will be able to securely access information needed to care for any patient regardless of where care is being delivered – in an urban hospital or rural community clinic, in a physician’s office or emergency department.

[www.calrhio.org](http://www.calrhio.org)

#### About OCPRHIO

OCPRHIO is a multi-stakeholder collaborative dedicated to improving the quality, safety, and efficiency of health care in Orange County by enhancing the ability of the health care delivery system to capture and share health innovation, improve efficiency, and protect patient privacy. This will be enabled through the routine and effective use of health care information technologies. The group is supported by the Public Health Foundation Enterprises, a 501c 3 fiscal sponsor. [www.phfe.org](http://www.phfe.org)

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