

**For Immediate Release**

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## **New Tool Kit of Resources on Electronic Health Records Is Available**

CHARLESTON – New resources are available now to help West Virginians – including physicians, other health care providers and consumers – understand electronic health records, which are gradually replacing traditional paper records.

“We have developed a tool kit that includes pamphlets, brochures and posters that physicians can use to help their patients understand the many benefits of having electronic health records, as well as privacy and security precautions,” Patty Ruddick, project director of the West Virginia Health Information Security and Privacy Collaboration, said.

These resources are available in both printed form and electronically in downloadable form at [www.eHealthWV.org](http://www.eHealthWV.org). Also available at the Web site is much more information about electronic health records and secure health information exchange.

The eHealthWV effort, which is funded by a federal grant to educate consumers about electronic health records, is providing this information at this time, because the switch over from paper records has begun in West Virginia, and the pace is expected to pick up in the next few years.

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The West Virginia effort is part of a national effort to educate consumers and providers about the importance of privacy and security in using electronic health records. The federal government has set a goal for most Americans to have electronic health records by 2014.

“Storing health records on paper was fine for the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, but electronic health records offer us a 21<sup>st</sup> century solution that can help improve the quality of health care and the safety of patients,” Dr. Mark Stephens, a physician with the West Virginia Medical Institute and a practicing physician in Charleston, said. “It’s time for consumers and providers to understand their benefits.”

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