



OCT 30 2014

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am writing to update you on recent accomplishments and plans for the Indian Health Service (IHS) Resource and Patient Management System (RPMS).

As you know, RPMS is a comprehensive health information system created to support high quality health care delivery to American Indian and Alaska Native people. A lesser known fact about RPMS is that it is the only health information system designed specifically to support the direct care and public health mission of the IHS.

With over 80 integrated software applications, RPMS supports virtually all clinical and business processes, including patient registration and scheduling, pharmacy and laboratory information systems, a fully capable electronic health record (EHR), and revenue cycle applications. The system has been selected and is in use in over 400 IHS, Tribal, and Urban (I/T/U) facilities nationwide that provide care to more than 1.5 million American Indian and Alaska Native patients.

The RPMS has its roots in the Veterans Administration's acclaimed VistA health information system, which recently emerged as the top-rated EHR system by physicians in a national survey. Over time, however, RPMS has evolved, adding many improvements, functions, and interface capabilities that do not exist in VistA. We are also continually enhancing RPMS to meet the changing needs of the Indian Health community.

RPMS is also the only Government-sponsored EHR that is certified for Meaningful Use. The RPMS suite was certified as a complete EHR for ambulatory and inpatient settings in 2011. Since that time, I/T/U sites around the country have received over \$119 million in Medicare and Medicaid incentive payments. In August 2014, the RPMS suite was again certified against the much more stringent and far-reaching criteria for Stage 2 of Meaningful Use. This will allow I/T/U facilities using RPMS to continue to participate in the Meaningful Use initiative through at least 2017.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) establish standards and other criteria for structured data that EHRs must use in order to qualify for this incentive program. Certification of EHR technology assures purchasers and other users that the EHR system offers the necessary technological capability, functionality, and security to help them meet the Meaningful Use criteria. Certification also helps providers and patients be confident that the electronic health IT products and systems they use are secure, can maintain data confidentially, and can work with other systems to share information.

An industry leader, RPMS has been recognized for outstanding achievements in health information technology and innovation. A list of industry awards for RPMS since 2005 is provided for your review (see Enclosure).

The IHS is now in the midst of the largest and most rapid deployment of EHR enhancements we have ever undertaken, assisting the Area Offices in their support of the 2014 EHR upgrades across the I/T/U. The Agency will soon be launching a host of new capabilities that will greatly improve access to essential information and communication among patients and providers.

Examples include the Personal Health Record, which will enable patients to view and download information from their medical record at any participating I/T/U facility; a secure e-mail service that will allow patients to exchange messages with their providers; and the Health Information Exchange, which will enable providers to view patient information from facilities within and external to the Indian health system. The IHS is also continuing our work to implement the new ICD-10 billing code set by the October 2015 deadline. This will ensure a smooth transition to the new requirements and continuity of revenue generation for RPMS users. Upgrades to the RPMS Practice Management suite, which includes patient registration and scheduling functions, will soon also provide new billing features.

These are only a few of the dozens of ongoing development and enhancement projects that are underway in the IHS to continuously improve the information systems we provide. These exciting new tools will help us improve patient care quality, customer service, and patient satisfaction.

While we believe that RPMS remains a world class health information system that is competitive with the best-in-class systems on the market today at a very reasonable cost for our stakeholders, we also recognize that there is always opportunity for improvement. To that end, we recently conducted a system-wide survey of RPMS users. With a remarkable response rate of 66 percent (530 individual responses out of over 800 users surveyed), we are currently aggregating survey results and findings to help chart a path forward for the continuous improvement of RPMS.

The IHS is committed to meaningful consultation with Tribes as we advance health information technology in Indian Country. You are welcome to send comments to me in writing or by e-mail to consultation@ihs.gov. I look forward to your views and comments on the value that RPMS is providing today and where we can continue to make improvements.

Sincerely,

/Yvette Roubideaux/

Yvette Roubideaux, M.D., M.P.H.
Acting Director

Enclosure

**Indian Health Service (IHS)
Resource and Patient Management System (RPMS)**

Industry Innovation Awards

- 2005 Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS)
Nicholas E. Davies Award in Public Health –

RPMS Clinical Reporting System

- 2008 HIMSS *Nicholas E. Davies Award in Public Health*

Cherokee Indian Hospital, for using RPMS EHR and iCare to improve health care delivery

- 2011 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services *HHSInnovates –*

Electronic Health Records in Action – using RPMS for real-time H1N1 influenza surveillance nationwide during pandemic

- 2011 Computerworld Honors – *Laureate in Health –*

RPMS iCare Population Management application

- 2012 Computerworld Honors – *Laureate in Health –*

Cherokee Indian Hospital, for using data from RPMS to optimize Emergency Department workflow, reduce waiting times, and improve customer service

- 2012 and 2013 Surescripts *White Coat of Quality Award –*

For quality in electronic prescribing using RPMS