

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Greg Schieke, Senior Vice President
Telephone: 402-476-1399
E-mail: gschieke@widerivertec.org
Web site: www.cimronebraska.org OR www.widerivertec.org



**CIMRO of Nebraska Awarded Health Information Technology
Regional Extension Center Cooperative Agreement**

Lincoln, Neb. – CIMRO of Nebraska is pleased to introduce Wide River Technology Extension Center (Wide River TEC) as Nebraska’s Regional Extension Center for Health Information Technology (HIT). Regional Extension Centers were established as part of the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act. \$6.6 million was awarded to CIMRO of Nebraska, the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization for the state of Nebraska, as a four-year cooperative agreement grant from The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONCHIT) to establish Wide River TEC to assist Nebraska healthcare providers with implementing and using Electronic Health Records (EHRs).

Wide River TEC will offer technical assistance, guidance and information on best practices to support and accelerate healthcare providers’ efforts to become meaningful users of EHRs, as well as the ability to exchange health information with other providers and agencies. Wide River TEC services will be available to all healthcare providers in the state, including those who already have an EHR in place. Priority will be given to Nebraska practitioners providing primary care in individual and small-group practices; Critical Access Hospitals providing primary care; rural health clinics; Federally Qualified Health Centers; and other settings that serve uninsured, underinsured and medically-underserved populations. Individual provider education and training will be conducted through onsite visits and individualized technical assistance. A team approach will be utilized, with highly-trained nursing informatics and technical specialists providing technical assistance.

“We are very pleased and excited to have received the award to serve as Nebraska’s Regional Extension Center. This is a great opportunity for CIMRO of Nebraska and we look forward to partnering with stakeholders throughout the state to build on technology efforts already underway. We are extremely delighted to offer assistance, resources and support to help enhance the quality and value of healthcare in Nebraska through EHR adoption and implementation,” stated Tina Georgy, RN, MS, Chief Executive Officer of CIMRO of Nebraska.

ONCHIT is organizationally located within The Office of the Secretary for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and is charged with coordination of nationwide efforts to implement and use the most advanced HIT and the electronic exchange of health information.

“The consistent, nationwide adoption and use of secure EHRs will ultimately enhance the quality and value of healthcare. Certified EHR technology used in a meaningful way is one piece of a broader HIT infrastructure needed to reform the healthcare system and improve healthcare quality, efficiency, and patient safety. Widespread adoption of EHRs holds great promise for improving healthcare quality, efficiency and patient safety,” said National Coordinator for Health Information Technology David Blumenthal, M.D., M.P.P.

ONCHIT will also establish a national Health Information Technology Research Center, funded separately, which will gather relevant information on effective practices from a wide variety of sources across the country. This will enable Wide River TEC and other Regional Extension Centers nationwide to collaborate with one another and relevant stakeholders to identify and share best practices in EHR adoption, effective use and provider support.

Efforts to establish Wide River TEC as a distinct business unit within the CIMRO of Nebraska corporation are currently underway. CIMRO of Nebraska will be contacting eligible physicians and providers in the near future. The Wide River TEC Web site will offer updates on the launch of the organization and updates on Wide River TEC progress. Visit www.widerivertec.org soon for additional details.

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