PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

STATEWIDE PATIENT ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN UNDERWAY

BATON ROUGE, LA – (Oct. 12, 2015) – The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) and the Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum have launched a joint, statewide campaign to educate Louisiana’s patients and families about how to use available health information technology (IT) tools to improve their health and health care decision-making.

The ‘Your Health in Your Hands’ campaign launched Aug. 1, making Louisiana the first state in the nation to pioneer a direct-to-consumer campaign that engages patients and families in the use of health IT.

“The ‘Your Health in Your Hands’ campaign is another tool we’re using to make sure Louisianans know that health IT improvements can directly improve their quality of care,” said DHH Secretary Kathy H. Kliebert. “Louisiana is one of the country’s leaders in health IT, and this campaign keeps that trend going.”

“This is something that no other state has yet attempted,” said Cindy Munn, CEO of the Quality Forum. “We are very excited and proud that Louisiana is leading the way and receiving so much positive national attention for these efforts.”

A key component of the campaign is its website, www.makemyhealth.me, where Louisiana residents can find valuable information and resources designed to engage them in their health and health care. The website features information about health IT tools such as electronic health records (EHRs), patient portals and the statewide health information exchange (HIE). In addition, the website provides patients and families with information about patient rights, such as how to request copies of their medical records and how to use those records to improve their health.

“Our ultimate goal is to make sure Louisianans know the value of health IT, so we’re spreading our message as widely as possible,” said Kliebert. “Whether a resident spends his or her time on Facebook or listening to the radio, we’re putting the message in front of them.”
Munn noted, “Research has shown that patients who are engaged in their care tend to have better outcomes and lower costs, and the goal of this campaign is to ensure that Louisiana residents have the knowledge and tools necessary to be engaged patients.”

Louisiana State Rep. Jack Montoucet, Crowley, has seen a demand from his constituents for improvements in health IT.

“I’ve talked to constituents who really understand and are asking for improvements to Louisiana’s health information technology infrastructure,” said Montoucet. “I actually sponsored a bill this year to do just that. Act 378 is specific to mammograms, and the idea is to provide more information to patients so they can make the best decision for their treatment.”

The ‘Your Health in Your Hands’ campaign is paid for through Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act funding, which is intended to improve American health care delivery and patient care through investment in health information technology. For more information about the patient engagement campaign, contact info@makemyhealth.me.

About the Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum
The Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum is a private, not-for-profit organization, dedicated to advancing evidence-based, collaborative initiatives to improve the health of Louisiana residents. Its focus areas include quality measurement and analytics, clinical quality improvement, the patient-centered medical home/care coordination model, Louisiana Physician Orders for Scope of Treatment (LaPOST), outreach/education and health information technology (IT). With regard to health IT, the Quality Forum is the State-Designated Entity to support health care providers and critical access/rural hospitals as they adopt and meaningfully use electronic health records and to lead the planning and implementation of the state’s health information exchange. For more information, visit www.lhcqf.org.

About the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals
The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals strives to protect and promote health statewide and to ensure access to medical, preventive and rehabilitative services for all state citizens. To learn more about DHH, visit www.dhh.louisiana.gov. For up-to-date health information, news and emergency updates, follow DHH's Twitter account and Facebook.

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