



SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR

CATHERINE D. TORRES, M.D., CABINET SECRETARY

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Media contact: Aimee Barabe
Cell: 575-470-2290

Department of Health Announces Electronic Immunization Data Exchange

The New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) announces the start of electronic data exchange between health care providers and the New Mexico Statewide Immunization Information System (NMSIIS). “This exchange will provide more accurate immunization records for New Mexico’s children to assure that they get the immunizations that they need and do not receive immunizations unnecessarily,” said Dr. Catherine Torres, Cabinet Secretary of DOH. The Taos Clinic for Children and Youth and Albuquerque Health Partners, in partnership with the New Mexico Health Information Collaborative, confirmed today that they have successfully submitted data from their Electronic Health Records (EHR) to the NMSIIS. The data was submitted electronically and contained thousands of immunization records. The electronic submission of the data saved hundreds of hours of data entry for the health care providers. In addition to saving time, electronic data exchange also: lowers errors, makes information available sooner and results in more complete immunization information.

“I applaud the new launch of the NMSIIS data exchange. As a former member of the National Vaccine Advisory Committee from 1993-1997, this NMSIIS data exchange becomes the realization of having state and national data platforms for patient information,” said Dr. Sylvia Fernandez Villarreal of the Taos Clinic for Children and Youth. “Currently, I am a member of the Advisory Commission on Childhood Vaccines. NMSIIS has made this step realized in implementing, providing and documenting quality standards in childhood immunizations in a timely and safe manner. Congratulations and thank you from a pediatrician who knows the day to day challenges of when did Jose get his ‘shots’ and keeping him safe from duplication, injury and illness.”

This successful exchange of immunization records is the result of a federal grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The grant funding has allowed the New Mexico Department of Health to make improvements to the NMSIIS and to help health care providers to implement electronic data exchange. As part of the grant, DOH plans to start exchanging data with four other provider groups. After the grant has been completed, more providers will begin exchanging data. This exchange marks a major milestone for DOH as it moves forward to enhance the NMSIIS to support health care providers as they work towards meaningful use of electronic health records.

“As the Electronic Health Record leader in the state’s largest physician owned practice, I am delighted that Department of Health employees and leaders are now receiving our information about patient immunizations through secure electronic connections, and we can stop manually enter that information in the state website,” Robert White, MD, MPH, Medical Informatics Director for ABQ Health Partners. “The day we started sending our immunization records automatically from our Electronic Health Record to the Department of Health through the New



Office of the Secretary

1190 St. Francis Drive, N4100 • P.O. Box 26110 Santa Fe, New Mexico • 87502-6110
(505) 827-2613 • FAX: (505) 827-2530 • <http://www.nmhealth.org>

Mexico Health Information Collaborative electronic exchange, I received hugs from several pediatric clinic nurses. They are delighted to use their time and our EHR more efficiently and accurately. To add icing on the cake, we made the change the Friday before our busy Saturday flu shot clinic for kids. Our work to adopt electronic technology is benefiting our staff, doctors, patients and the state.”

The NMSIIS is operated by DOH’s Public Health Division. The NMSIIS is an important tool used by public and private providers in recording and tracking the immunization status of individuals and is used to improve rates of immunization. The registry is also used to track vaccine inventory, generate detailed reports on rates of immunization, and as a valuable tool assisting in epidemiological investigations of vaccine-preventable disease.

For more information regarding the NMSIIS and other vaccination issues, please visit the New Mexico Department of Health’s Immunization website at <http://www.immunizenm.org/>.

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