

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Health Foundation Awards RHIO Funds to Improve Lab Test Reporting

Greater Rochester Health Foundation (Health Foundation) awarded the Rochester Regional Health Information Organization (Rochester RHIO) \$599,108 to fund a three-year project as part of the Health Foundation's strategic focus on health care delivery. The project will help the health care system in a 13-county area convert to a standardized set of codes for laboratory



results. Once completed, medical professionals will be able to more fully evaluate a patient's lab results regardless of where the tests were performed. Currently, the 19 independent labs and hospitals system labs in the area use different codes, making it challenging and time consuming for physicians to effectively use lab results.

The grant will enable the RHIO to be more effective in exchanging timely clinical data with physicians and other medical professionals and to accurately analyze information from different health care providers. "While patients don't see the back room operations of such clinical improvement, they will be better served because a physician will be able to more readily evaluate lab results regardless of location so that patients may avoid the inconvenience and cost of duplicative tests. This

will have a significant impact on the quality of clinical care in the community," said Louis Papa, M.D., chair of the Health Foundation's program committee.

Ted Kremer, Executive Director of the Rochester RHIO commented, "Creating a more intelligent and patient centric healthcare system really requires us to be speaking the same language, as such this effort will help support many of the care transformation and improvement efforts around our region. We are really excited and pleased to see the level of community support for this project already and the opportunities before us."

Because federal "meaningful use" guidelines will require that lab values be standardized to make comparisons across labs, there is increasing incentive for the community to develop uniform lab codes as soon as possible. A clinical steering committee composed of clinical



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leadership from the health care systems and major labs is working to establish a community standard of reporting to determine how to best map out a process to implement a more integrated system.

“The major motivation of the Health Foundation to invest in this project is to improve the quality of care for patients across our nine-county service area. Improvements in data reporting will help improve analysis at the physician practice, hospital system, Accountable Care Organization and community levels. We continue to have one the most effective RHIOs in the country and are very confident in its ability to convene the medical community to successfully implement this improvement,” said John Urban, president and CEO of the Health Foundation.

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Photo Caption

Thomas Anthony, supervisor of automated chemistry, runs tests for ACM Labs, one of the first labs to participate in the process to standardize lab cores throughout the region.