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NEWS RELEASE

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MASSACHUSETTS eHEALTH COLLABORATIVE LAUNCHES PROJECT TO WIRE HEALTH CARE IN THE STATE

BOSTON—December 6, 2004—The Massachusetts eHealth Collaborative (MAeHC) – a newly launched non-profit entity backed by 34 leading institutions seeking to create a state-wide health information network to improve the quality, safety, and affordability of health care – today announced the appointment of its CEO, Mr. Micky Tripathi, who released a request for applications for communities interested in participating in the organization’s technology pilots.

Mr. Tripathi will join MAeHC as its Chief Executive Officer next month, announced Dr. Allan H. Goroll, M.D., Chairman of MAeHC and governor of the Massachusetts Chapter of the American College of Physicians. Mr. Tripathi brings to MAeHC valuable expertise in business and health technology. He was most recently a manager at the Boston Consulting Group, and worked on loan as the founding President and CEO of the Indiana Health Information Exchange, a non-profit corporation that is creating a similar community-wide electronic health information network in the Indianapolis area.

Mr. Tripathi released a Request for Applications directed at Massachusetts communities interested in hosting health information technology pilot projects (available at http://www.maehc.org/index_files/rfa.htm). “Our ultimate goal is to foster the creation of a state-wide health information exchange,” said Mr. Tripathi, “but that can’t happen overnight, so we’re going to proceed in careful deliberate steps, beginning with these pilot projects.” MAeHC envisions funding three separate demonstration sites, each of which will be a test-bed for universal adoption of electronic health records and decision support infrastructure that links together physician office practices, health centers, hospitals, laboratories, pharmacies, and other medical entities.

“We’re looking for communities that can demonstrate the leadership, energy, and commitment to put these technologies to the test and give us practical guidance about how to overcome the major barriers that have prevented universal adoption up until now” said Mr. Tripathi. For example, it is critically important to identify and implement best practice solutions to ensure the security, privacy, and confidentiality of patient information.

The pilot programs will purchase and install EHRs in participants’ office settings, and will provide those systems with inter-operability with other systems to allow data exchange and use of common decision support tools. The pilots will also promote reimbursement mechanisms to facilitate widespread adoption and sustained use of the technology over the long run.

Communities will be chosen based on a number of criteria. MAeHC is looking for communities that have a substantial portion of their residents’ health care delivered in that community, and

whose institutional providers and health care professionals (including hospital, primary care and specialty care physicians, Visiting Nurses Associations (VNA), lab and radiology facilities and pharmacies) are committed to adopting electronic health records (EHR), decision support tools, and community-wide information exchange capabilities. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts has pledged \$50 million to help fund the pilots, and the final selection of the participating communities will be announced by MAeHC in March 2005.

MAeHC is made up of 34 organizations who have been working together for the past eight months to turn their shared vision of a state-wide health information infrastructure into reality. The coalition includes representatives from physicians' and nurses' groups, hospitals, health plans, the state government, provider and technology associations, and business, purchaser and public interest groups. The creation of MAeHC grew out of the recognition by a number of organizations that the job of making a quantum leap forward in quality, safety, and affordability of health care in a system as large, complex, and inter-connected as ours was too big for any one organization to take on by itself.

“The Massachusetts eHealth Collaborative is a truly collective effort. We have the strong support of our member organizations, the most generous funding in the nation to date, and the enthusiastic backing of state government. With all of this going for it, MAeHC has the best chance in decades to fundamentally improve health care, which we hope will benefit the citizens of the Commonwealth and be a model for the nation” said Mr. Tripathi.

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