

# Washington Health Information Collaborative



## Announcement of 2009 Funding Opportunity for Health Information Technology



In 2009, First Choice Health, the Washington State Health Care Authority, Qualis Health and the Puget Sound Health Alliance have once more joined forces to continue the Washington Health Information Collaborative (WHIC). The WHIC is offering financial incentives and consulting support to eligible applicants who may be adopting, expanding, or enhancing Health Information Technology (Health IT) within their practices.

A second round of funding is being made available by the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) exclusively for providers selected to participate in the Washington Patient-Centered Medical Home Collaborative. This collaborative is sponsored by the Department of Health and the Washington Academy of Family Physicians. Awards of up to \$7,000 will be made to qualified applicants. Funding is aimed at providing programming or technical support to enhance, modify or expand existing electronic health record system or registry data collection, management, and reporting capabilities required and a condition of participation in the Medical Home Collaborative.

The first funding round was provided by First Choice Health and announced on May 6, 2009. The application submission period for this first funding round closed on July 31, 2009. While the first funding round was made available to all providers in the First Choice Health Network, funding priority was being given to qualified applicants participating in the Medical Home Collaborative.

Medical Home Collaborative participants who may have already applied for a grant during the first round may also apply for this second round of funding. If an applicant's grant proposal is successful in both grant rounds they will only receive award money from one of the grant opportunities. WHIC members are collaborating in the application review, scoring, and award processes for both grant rounds to ensure evaluation consistency and equity of grant funding distribution.

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## **Important Dates**

Announcement of Funding Opportunity	August 5, 2009
Q & A period	August 5 – August 14 <sup>th</sup>
Applications Due	August 31, 2009
Award announcements	September 15, 2009

## **Definitions:**

*Provider:* for the purposes of this announcement, a Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Naturopathy, Doctor of Osteopathy, Physician Assistant, or Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner.

*CCHIT:* the Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology, a voluntary, private-sector initiative acting as an independent certification authority for electronic health records and their networks. (Website: [www.cchit.org](http://www.cchit.org))

*Collaborative:* the Washington Health Information Collaborative.

*Doctor's Office Quality Information Technology (DOQ-IT):* A project funded by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and designed to improve care quality, patient safety, and efficiency for services provided to Medicare beneficiaries by promoting the use of Health IT in primary care physician offices.

*Health Information Technology (Health IT):* electronic health information management technology including Electronic Medical Records, Personal Health Records, and electronic information management systems that include functions such as chronic disease registries, decision support tools, electronic data reporting, computerized physician order entry, clinician feedback mechanisms, and electronic prescribing.

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## **Background**

The Washington Health Information Collaborative is a public-private partnership comprised of First Choice Health, the Washington State Health Care Authority, Qualis Health, and the Puget Sound Health Alliance.

First Choice Health is a regionally-based hospital and physician owned company that provides health care services to nearly one million members in Washington State and other parts of the Pacific Northwest. The company emphasizes quality health care, public service, and bringing technology to benefit health care practitioners and patients.

The Washington State Health Care Authority is an independent cabinet level agency. It administers health programs that provide access to high-quality health care for more than 500,000 Washington residents including 336,000 state and local government employees, retirees, and their dependents and 94,000 enrollees in Basic Health, a state-subsidized program for low-income families.

The Puget Sound Health Care Alliance is a private, non-profit organization serving the five metropolitan counties of the central Puget Sound region: King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish and Thurston counties. The Alliance is a collaborative effort of those who provide, pay for, and use health care services, all working together to improve the quality of patient care for a healthier community, at a price more people can afford.

Qualis Health is dedicated to improving the quality of healthcare delivery and health outcomes for individuals and populations across the nation. In operation since 1974, the non-profit, healthcare quality improvement organization (QIO) is headquartered in Seattle, Washington and has offices in Idaho and Alaska. Qualis Health is contracted by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

Health IT adoption has significant potential to improve outcomes of care by facilitating access to medical information, reducing medical errors through the use of provider and patient decision support tools, providing evidence based practice protocols, and contributing to increased clinical and administrative efficiencies in our health care system. We believe that clinical adoption of Health IT will ultimately not only improve the quality of care, but also lower health care costs and lead to greater availability and use of clinical data in the health care marketplace.

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## **Project Description**

The WHIC is providing funding for a variety of potential projects across a continuum of adoption and existing system capability enhancement. Awards to eligible applicants for this second round of funding will be made to fund partial costs of acquisition and expansion of Health IT systems.

Specifically, funding will be awarded for projects addressing the following:

- Increased functionality of Health IT already in operation:
  - Purchase and/or implementation of additional modules (including decision support tools, computerized physician order entry, clinician feedback mechanisms, and chronic disease registry functions)
  - Data analysis and reporting capabilities
- Expanded patient access to their own medical information (personal health record features) and increased patient engagement in their care.

Funding will not be made available at this time for preliminary exploration of system options nor assessment of the viability of Health IT adoption for any given practice or facility. Successful applicants shall demonstrate due diligence in evaluating practice or facility readiness for a project funded by the WHIC.

## ***Goals and Desirable Outcomes***

The WHIC has identified several main goals and desirable outcomes for this funding round.

The goals are:

1. Create incentives for practice redesign in medical provider practices around the availability and enhanced use of medical information to improve health care outcomes and the doctor-patient relationship.
2. Increase efficiencies in the provision of health care services.
3. Improve technical capabilities that support conditions of participation in Medical Home Collaborative activities.

Desirable outcomes include:

1. Enhanced delivery system infrastructure to improve patient care.
2. Enhanced use of patient or disease registries by primary care providers.
3. Increased use of decision support tools and reporting mechanisms.

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4. Increased use of feedback mechanisms by providers to gauge practice performance.
5. Creation of a shared knowledge base about Health IT adoption processes, system use, and outcomes.
6. Increased awareness of the clinical value of using Health IT.

### **Eligibility**

Grants for this funding round will be limited to qualified applicants participating in the Washington Patient-Centered Medical Home Collaborative.

### *Application and Award Process*

1. If after reviewing this announcement, you decide to apply, you must submit an **Application** by August 31, 2009. The 2009 Application is available at the [Washington Health Information Collaborative](#) web site.
2. Applicant questions may be submitted from August 5 - August 14 via e-mail to [awardsgna@hca.wa.gov](mailto:awardsgna@hca.wa.gov). A cumulative list of **2009 Questions and Answers** is available on the WHIC web site.
3. Applicants must submit supporting documentation as required in the application.
4. Announcement of awards will be made on September 15, 2009.

Before submitting your application, we strongly urge you to review the following five documents, as they pertain to your proposal, linked on the [WHIC](#) web site:

- 2009 WHIC Grant Overview (PDF)
- Planning and Implementation Checklist (PDF)
- Increased Functionality Checklist (PDF)
- Determining Whether Your Practice is Ready to Adopt Health IT
- 2009 Questions and Answers (PDF)

*If you have additional questions please contact:*

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