Learning Health Community Launches Multi-Stakeholder Initiative to Develop LHS Policy and Governance Framework

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Research Triangle Park, NC – On October 27, 2014, over two dozen multi-stakeholder thought leaders spanning the health IT, health policy, and health care arenas gathered to discuss a policy and governance framework for a national-scale (and ultimately global) Learning Health System (LHS). The North Carolina Healthcare Information and Communications Alliance, Inc. (NCHICA) hosted the meeting, which marked the launch of the LHS governance initiative of the Learning Health Community.

The multi-stakeholder Learning Health Community (www.LearningHealth.org) itself grew out of the groundbreaking 2012 LHS Summit in Washington, DC, sponsored by the Joseph H. Kanter Family Foundation. Members of the Community have a shared belief in the LHS Core Values (http://www.learninghealth.org/about-the-community/) developed by the LHS Summit’s over 80 participants representing organizations spanning the health spectrum.

According to Dr. Charles Friedman, Community Interim Steering Committee chair, “In the LHS, we will harness the power of data and analytics to learn from the experiences of large numbers of individuals and feed the knowledge and learning generated of ‘what works best’ back to all stakeholders to improve the health of individuals and populations.” The LHS concept gained increasing attention as a result of a series of Institute of Medicine (IOM) workshops and related reports beginning in 2007 (http://iom.edu/~/media/Files/Activity%20Files/Quality/VSRT/Core%20Documents/LearningHealthSystem.pdf).

Widespread support for the vision is seen in federal grants, ongoing patient advocacy initiatives, journal publications, and the birth of a multi-stakeholder grassroots coalition (www.LearningHealth.org/endorsers) working to achieve individual, public and population health and healthcare improvements. Envisioning the LHS as a paradigm, participants noted that the LHS can transform healthcare and health the way the Internet has transformed commerce and communication. Josh Rubin, JD, who serves on the Community’s Interim Steering Committee, noted, “When successful, the policy and governance framework will facilitate and incentivize an optimal level of trust and collaboration to drive continuous innovation, ultimately helping the lives and improving the health of current and future generations.”

Holt Anderson, who served as NCHICA’s Executive Director for nearly two decades, and is now focusing his efforts on leading the LHS policy and governance framework task initiative,
commented, “there has been a lot of discussion and a degree of consensus built that a LHS will improve care based on treatment of individuals and populations with similar conditions, and what is needed now to move us forward is action – guided by a roadmap that participants can agree on.” Participants at the October 27th meeting organized into task forces that will identify concrete deliverables, engage additional interested parties, and develop timelines and project plans for moving their work forward. NCHICA will facilitate continued collaboration among the task forces.

Rubin noted further, “achieving an operational LHS is too big and audacious a project for any one organization or group to undertake alone and it will only ultimately work for everyone if we all realize it together.”

About NCHICA

The North Carolina Healthcare Information and Communications Alliance, Inc. (NCHICA) is a nonprofit consortium dedicated to assisting NCHICA members in accelerating the transformation of the United States healthcare system through the effective use of information technology, informatics, and analytics. Members include leading organizations in healthcare, research and information technology. For more information, please visit: www.nchica.org.

About the Learning Health Community

The mission of the Learning Health Community is to serve as the center of collaboration, intelligence, and action to lead and galvanize a grassroots movement in which multiple and diverse stakeholders work together to transform healthcare and health by collaboratively realizing a national-scale (and ultimately global) person-centered, continuous and rapid learning health system (LHS). The vision for the LHS is embodied in the consensus LHS Core Values that have been formally endorsed to date by over 60 organizations spanning the health spectrum. Over 1,000 individuals are involved in various capacities in this ever-growing movement. For more information, please visit: www.LearningHealth.org.