

RxHub Attends Capitol Hill Briefing on Modernizing Healthcare through Electronic Prescribing

St. Paul, MN — December 5, 2007— RxHub, the nations' largest national patient health information network, participated in a Capitol Hill briefing today held by Former Speaker Newt Gingrich and Senator John Kerry on Modernizing Healthcare through Electronic Prescribing for Hill staff and policy makers. They were joined by Senate Finance Committee Members Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and John Ensign (R-NV), Senator John Sununu (R-NH) and Dr. Andrew Warner. Discussions included information on what the federal government can do to make physician adoption of e-prescribing a priority.

Senators John Kerry and John Ensign led a bipartisan group of legislators today to introduce a bill that would expedite the adoption of electronic prescribing technology in every doctor's office in America. Prescribing electronically instead of by-hand has been proven to save lives and cut costs on a massive scale.

As a result of prescription errors, American hospital patients are hit with 1.5 million injuries each year, according to the Institute of Medicine. Medication errors will kill at least 7,000 Americans in 2007. Of the more than three billion prescriptions written each year, doctors report nearly one billion require a follow-up between providers and pharmacies for clarification. The health-care system costs are in the billions.

Kerry's bill would foster the adoption of e-prescribing by providing permanent Medicare funding for payment bonuses to physicians who acquire e-prescribing technology. In addition, for every Medicare prescription a doctor writes electronically, they will be paid an extra 1% bonus. Starting in 2011, Medicare physicians who are not electronically prescribing would face financial penalties.

"E-prescribing will save money, save time, save doctors from piles of paperwork, and most importantly, save lives," said Sen. Kerry. "Deaths and injuries from hand-written prescriptions could be nearly eliminated if e-prescriptions were adopted on a wide scale. We need to seize this bi-partisan opportunity and make this common sense reform a reality now."

Specifically, the bill would:

1. Provide permanent Medicare funding for one-time grants to physicians to help offset the start-up costs to physicians of acquiring and implementing e-prescribing technology.
2. Provide permanent Medicare funding for payment bonuses to physicians for use of e-prescribing. For every Medicare prescription that is written electronically, physicians will be paid an extra 1% bonus.
3. Starting on Jan 1, 2011, physicians will be required to write their Medicare outpatient prescriptions electronically. Physicians that continue to write prescriptions by hand will face a per-claim financial penalty.

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4. The Secretary of HHS will be given authority to grant one- or two-year hardship waivers for physicians who face particular difficulties in acquiring and implementing e-prescribing – especially those from rural areas or very small (or solo) practices.

5. GAO and CMS will be directed to report within two years on the status of e-prescribing adoption within Medicare.

Tom Groom, senior vice president of business development for RxHub was in attendance. “Healthcare remains the last major industry still using technology from centuries ago – pen and paper,” stated Groom. “Replacing paper prescriptions with electronic prescribing tools will improve patient safety, improve clinical workflow efficiencies, and reduce the cost of healthcare delivery within the United States.”

RxHub is a member of The Center for Health Transformation, founded by Newt Gingrich. The Center is a high-impact collaboration of private and public sector leaders committed to creating a 21st Century Intelligent Health System that saves lives and saves money for all Americans.

“RxHub has developed a secure infrastructure to effectively connect ePrescribing functionality for prescribers, pharmacists and payers within the United States,” stated Speaker Newt Gingrich. “This expansive access is saving lives and saving money for millions of Americans.”

The RxHub National Health Information Network™ connects authorized physicians and pharmacists to critical prescription information for consenting patients at the point of care. This information enables clinicians to effectively manage the patients’ use of medications and counsel patients on safe and affordable choices *before* prescriptions are electronically transmitted to retail and mail order pharmacies. RxHub is contracted to provide vital patient-specific prescription information for more than 200 million Americans in the United States.

About RxHub LLC

RxHub (www.rxhub.net) manages the RxHub National Patient Health Information Network™ which electronically routes up-to-date patient-specific medication history and pharmacy benefit information to caregivers at every point of care. Our end-to-end solution enables physicians to prescribe the most clinically appropriate and cost effective prescription and send it electronically to the patient’s pharmacy of choice. Operating as a cost recovery business model, RxHub partners with stakeholders in the prescribing industry to improve patient safety, increase workflow efficiency and reduce the overall cost of health care delivery.

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