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NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

**DHHS, Nevada State Medical Association and Orion Health™
Partner to Offer NV DIRECT Secure Messaging
for Health Information Exchange (HIE)**
Free NV DIRECT Email Addresses for the First 200 Qualifying Participants

CARSON CITY, NV – The Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) announced today that NV DIRECT is now available for health care providers. NV DIRECT is a secure, encrypted web-based communication system for physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, nurses, and other clinical staff to directly share protected health information (PHI) with known, trusted recipients. It does not require participants to have an electronic health record or to purchase additional software. The only requirement is a connection to the Internet.

Unlike other types of secure email, Direct Secure Messaging solutions conform to national standards, including ensuring verification that a person or entity seeking access to electronic PHI is the one claimed. The messages can only be sent between two trusted sources, only within the Direct secure mail server environment.

NV DIRECT is made possible by a DHHS vendor, Orion Health Inc., which has provided the technology and related services, and is hosting NV DIRECT for free, until the non-profit Nevada Health Information Exchange (NV-HIE) establishes more robust HIE services later this year.

Under an HIE connectivity grant from DHHS, the Nevada State Medical Association (NSMA) will administer stimulus funds from Nevada's State HIE Cooperative Agreement to cover the initial cost to participate in NV DIRECT. Through this partnership, DHHS will provide free NV DIRECT email addresses for the first 200 qualifying participants.

DHHS Director, Mike Willden, said, "NV DIRECT gives Nevada health care providers the means to share patient medical information directly and securely with each other, while meeting federal meaningful use requirements for electronic data exchange." He continued, "We appreciate the products and services Orion Health is providing to make this electronic HIE capability available statewide, and value the ongoing partnership with NSMA to move HIE initiatives forward."

"Orion Health is proud to support the State of Nevada in its mission to provide clinicians with the ability to securely exchange patient data and coordinate care across a variety of clinical settings and geographies," said Paul Viskovich, president, Orion Health North America. "We will draw on our two decades of experience developing clinician-ready eHealth solutions to ensure that Nevada providers have the support necessary for utilizing NV DIRECT to improve health care for residents throughout the state."

"The NSMA is pleased to assist in this important project," said David E. Hald, M.D, NSMA President. "Successful health care reform and improving the quality of health services are dependent on the successful integration of health information technology into the health care system at all levels."

The NV DIRECT web portal allows a provider to send a message to another provider with a NV DIRECT address. Using a secure clinical messaging protocol, it acts much like email, allowing providers to type messages, attach patient summaries and images, and send the information to known NV DIRECT recipients using national standards for secure transactions. The provider receiving the electronic message does not need to be in the same practice or health system, or even use the same electronic health or medical record system. NV DIRECT is HIPAA-compliant.

While NV DIRECT is currently being offered by DHHS, it will become part of the core HIE services offered by the NV-HIE in late 2013. NV-HIE is also the governing entity responsible for protecting the public interest regarding the privacy and security of PHI exchanged electronically.

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For more information:

<http://dhhs.nv.gov/NVDIRECT.htm>

<http://www.orionhealth.com/>

<http://www.nsmadocs.org/>