Carefx's Newest White Paper Illuminates Healthcare CIOs' Growing Role in Operations, Strategic Thinking and IT Project Decision Making

Five Seasoned CIOs Share Practical Insights on Physician Engagement, Career Success

Scottsdale, AZ (Vocus) May 29, 2009 -- Carefx Corporation, whose Fusionfx solution suite aggregates patient information across existing systems and offers clinicians single, clinically relevant views of patient information, today released the second in a series of white papers documenting the increasing involvement of healthcare chief information officers (CIOs) and chief medical information officers (CMIOs) in operations and physician engagement and decisions to initiate, postpone or cut IT projects.

"Carefx is proud to have an ongoing role in facilitating dialogue among CIOs and CMIOs who increasingly function as strategists, visionaries and operations executives," said Andrew Hurd, Carefx's Chairman and CEO. "The second Carefx white paper shines a light on professionals who are enthusiastic about newly available IT stimulus funds, but who still face tough financial decisions on IT investments and projects."

The Changing Role of the Healthcare CIO: Expanded Responsibilities in an Era of Economic Constraints was introduced at the April 2009 meeting of the Healthcare Information Management Systems Society (HIMSS) and was complemented by a live CIO/CMIO roundtable where healthcare CIOs and CMIOs shared insights on issues such as data retrieval, shifting roles and business and IT plan integration. These hospital leaders agreed that their ever-expanding roles increasingly involve a great deal of strategic thinking and planning. They also said that they spend much of their time working with clinicians to figure out ways to better utilize the data the organization collects. Said one, "We have spent the last 5 years figuring out how to get data into clinical apps, and now we need to figure out how to get the info out." Also, many said that interoperability should be viewed as providing more constituents with better access to data, rather than simply moving the data around.

Participants in the white paper include David Hotchkiss, Director of Academic Technology Services, University of Texas Health Science Center, San Antonio; Lynn Witherspoon, M.D., Systems Vice President and CMIO, Ochsner Health System, New Orleans; Benoit Long, Chief Information and Marketing Officer, Trillium Health Centre, Ontario, Canada; Tom Martin, Senior Vice President for Strategic and Support Services and CIO, Evergreen Healthcare, Kirkland, Washington; and Ken Lawonn, Senior Vice President and CIO, Alegent Health, Omaha, Nebraska.

The newly released white paper notes that healthcare IT typically involves a significant investment of dollars but comes without a quick turnaround. CIOs and CMIOs have an obligation to "avoid the short-sightedness of cutting projects on the front end without significant backend return," which means "heavier scrutiny of capital investments, greater attention to efficiencies and review of the patient's ability to pay as increases in bad debt and self-paying patients are matched by a dip in volume and a decline in discretionary diagnostics."

Insights within the white paper confirm some findings of the 20th Annual HIMSS Leadership Survey, where 28 percent of about 300 respondents reported that lack of adequate resources or budget remains the most significant barrier to successful IT implementation. A related April 2009 survey from Price Waterhouse Coopers revealed that 82 percent of hospital CIOs had already cut their IT spending budgets in 2009 by an average of 10 percent, with one in 10 making more drastic cuts of greater than 30 percent.

Carefx's initial white paper, The Changing Role of the Healthcare CIO: From Technologist to Strategist, Expert
Perspectives, was released in October 2008 and offered commentary on health IT from journalists, consultants, association executives and executive recruiters. Both white papers are available for download at http://www.carefx.com/cioseries.

About Carefx Corporation
Carefx supports healthcare organizations in achieving their vision of advancing the quality and safety of patient care delivery through its Fusionfx solution suite. Fusionfx streamlines and simplifies clinical and business workflow and connects care providers to the information they need - where, when, and how they need it. By managing care transitions and information gaps between diverse systems, departments and facilities, Fusionfx delivers crucial patient information with speed, efficiency and logic. Carefx supports more than 600 hospitals, health systems, regional health information organizations (RHIOs) and health information exchanges (HIEs) across North America and Europe.

Founded in 2002 and headquartered in Scottsdale, AZ, Carefx can be reached at (480) 833-5010.

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