Florida Medicaid's Personal Health Record Demonstration Project

My name is Christopher Sullivan and I am the Administrator of the Office of Health Information Technology within Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration. In addition to facilitating the adoption of electronic health records (EHR) and the electronic exchange of health information, the Agency is also the single state agency for the Medicaid program. As part of its role to improve access and the quality of care for Medicaid beneficiaries, the Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency) has initiated a plan to provide a personal health record (PHR) for Medicaid beneficiaries beginning in mid-2009. The plan for a beneficiary PHR is part of a larger two-year demonstration project that will provide multi-payer claims-based health information to treating physicians at the point of care. The Medicaid Health Information Exchange Demonstration Project will create and maintain secure web portals for the use of authorized providers and Medicaid recipients, with both of the web portals available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Availity L.L.C. is under contract with the Agency to provide the web portal for use by physicians and other authorized providers to support clinical decision-making and improve coordination of care. Providers can access the data for treatment purposes only and must have explicit authorization from the patient to receive the Medicaid data, except in a medical emergency. Health Trio is acting as a subcontractor to Availity and will provide a consumer web portal that offers the PHR for Medicaid beneficiaries. In the first year of the PHR, Health Trio will provide a PHR tool where Medicaid beneficiaries can log their health care information, and where they can gain access to health information, health care resources and links to credible health care websites. In the second year of the PHR demonstration project, HealthTrio will be able to download claims records, in a meaningful, clinically organized format, to the beneficiary's PHR, to further the data reporting available to Medicaid recipients.

While the purpose of this presentation is to address the Medicaid Personal Health Record, providing some background information on the Medicaid Health Information Exchange will create a context for the PHR. The Florida Center for Health Information and Policy Analysis has a history of actively leveraging the development of secure health information exchange across Florida and is engaged in numerous activities to promote the adoption of health information technology, access to health care services that require high speed broadband, and the administration of numerous grants and awards to study and implement health information exchange. The creation of the Medicaid Health Information Exchange developed out of this ongoing activity.
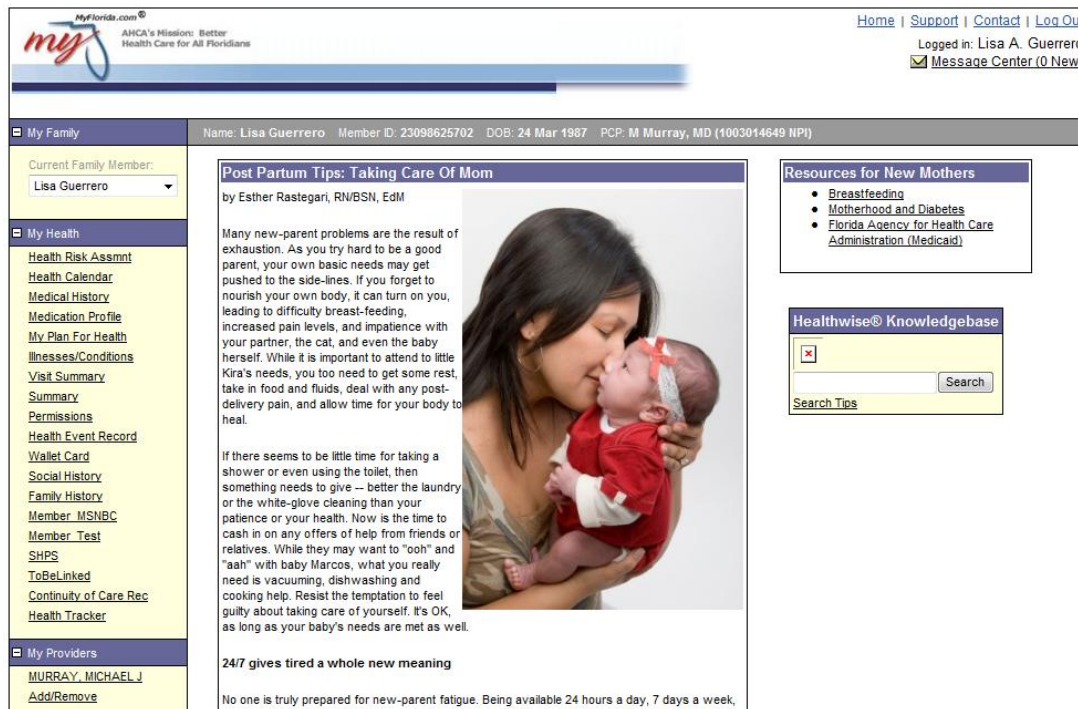
The Medicaid HIE was created as a means of delivering previously unavailable Medicaid claims information to providers at the point of care. The Agency was fortunate in partnering with Availity, which currently provides claims records from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida and Humana to providers. With the addition of the Medicaid data, the claims records from all three health plans can be integrated in a multi-payer, patient-centric, claims-based health information exchange. In our first roll-out year, the Medicaid HIE will allow providers to check eligibility and

benefits and submit claims to all three health plans. It will also provide an 18 month listing of patient encounter histories, identifying the doctor and all procedures for the patient. The HIE will also present prescription claims histories from each health plan and provide access to the Florida State Health Online Tracking System (SHOTS) immunization web portal. In its second year the Medicaid HIE will add laboratory reports and provide the ability to download claims to a provider's electronic medical record system or provide a data feed to a health information exchange. It is hoped that through the integrated presentation of records, providers will be able to identify gaps, duplications and other clinical issues that will assist them in care delivery. Medicaid beneficiary information can only be accessed after the patient has given consent to the provider, and then all available claims records are delivered, including the "super-confidential" records pertaining to substance abuse, mental health and HIV.

The Medicaid Personal Health Record project developed out of an interest in offering Medicaid beneficiaries access to their claims-based health care information that was being given to providers, and also provide access to health care information resources available online. The Agency published a set of web pages in 2008 devoted to promoting the use of PHRs for disaster preparedness, given the prevalence of hurricanes in Florida, so it was well aware of the utility of consumers safely storing their health care records in a secure location. Finally, the head of the Agency, Secretary Holly Benson, was also concerned that over half of all children born in Florida are covered by Medicaid. She felt that the PHR could become a source of information for new mothers, could be used to schedule well baby visits and prompt mothers about immunization schedules. Finally, the PHR could become a tool to empower Medicaid beneficiaries to take responsibility for their own health care by managing and updating a PHR with medical information that is important to them. An example of a web page in the PHR is shown in Figure 1.
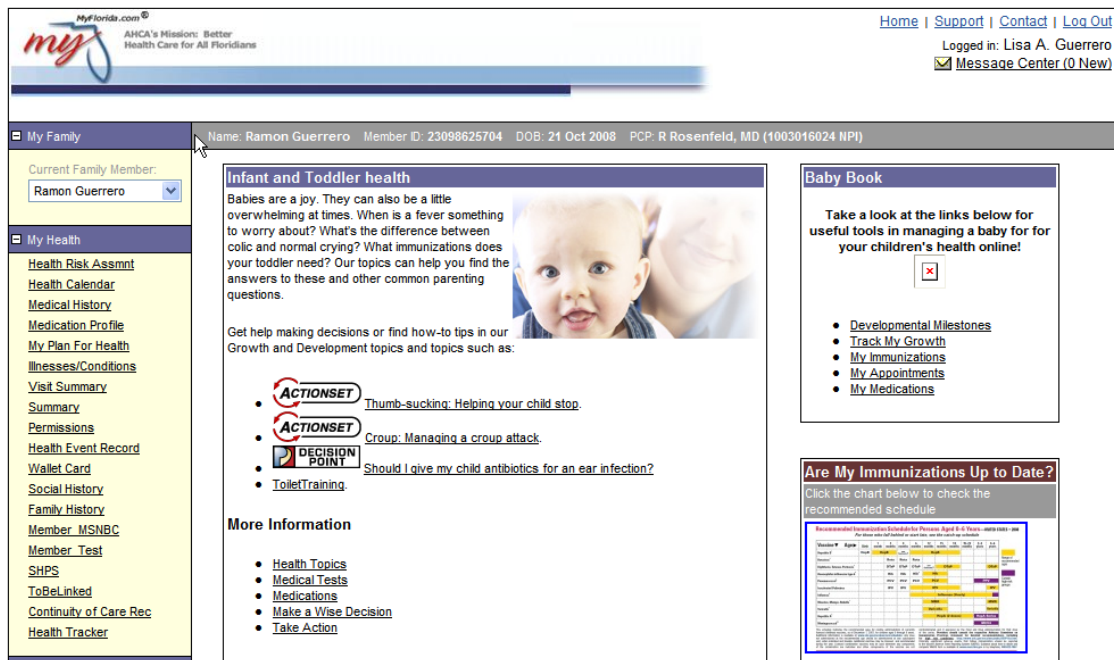
Figure 1. Example web page from the Florida Medicaid Personal Health Record for Mothers

The Agency is fortunate to be able to work with Health Trio, a nationally renowned Personal Health Record company. Health Trio will provide access to its PHR software to all 3 million Medicaid beneficiaries in Florida. The first target audience will be infants born under Medicaid and their mothers, or other caretakers. Health Trio will open a user account for each mother and a second account for the infant, and link the two so that the mother can easily access her child's records and enter health related information in her child's PHR. There will be no fee charged for the PHR. Mothers can log into their PHR using a username and password combination. Once the account is created, it will be available to mothers and their children even if they leave the Medicaid program.

In the first year of the demonstration project, Health Trio will provide the Personal Health Record software to Medicaid beneficiaries, within which they can record their health care information. The PHR will also offer consumer care management information and tools, such as infant and well-child health management tools, immunization schedules and appointment reminders and links to health information websites. It will also provide tools that assist consumers in identifying gaps, duplications and other clinical issues that may assist them in managing their own and their family's health. Health Trio will ensure that the information on the web portal is in a user-friendly format, and is considering both English and Spanish formats. The PHR will enable patients to download the PHR content to their computers or other storage devices, and will also ensure that the information in the PHR is can be sent to health data storage banks at no cost to the consumer, for either storage or transfer of information to another vendor. An example of the web page providing information resources for infants is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Example of the Infant and Toddler Information Web Page

In the second year of the demonstration project we hope to be able to add Medicaid claims records to the PHR software. Health Trio and the Agency will provide Medicaid beneficiary access to the patient's medical and prescription claims history provided by Florida Medicaid, contingent upon the development of a comprehensive identity management approach that is

approved by the Agency. While a username and password combination might be adequate for patient-entered information, a higher level of security is considered essential for access to protected health information. The Agency is considering appropriate authentication methods that will provide the most security for the patient claims records, particularly with regard to adults accessing the claims records of children. The identity management methodology has to ensure the confidentiality of information for both mother and child.

The PHR is also expected to have the ability to add laboratory, immunization and other records, as allowed by State and Federal laws. It will provide care management tools that assist consumers in identifying gaps, duplications and other health care issues in their own care. Patients should also be able to grant providers access to their PHR content, at no cost to the provider. The Health Trio PHR is expected to be available in early Fall of 2009. Plans for patient outreach are already underway, and it is hoped that the majority of new mothers with children born under Medicaid will enroll in the PHR.

Making Medicaid claims records available to providers and patients represents through robust and secure Internet gateways represents a step forward in serving the health care needs of Florida's most vulnerable citizens. The demonstration project also encourages health information exchange in Florida and opens a pathway for others to follow in exchanging both claims and clinical information across the state. By this example, the Agency hopes to spur on the development of a state level Health Information Exchange, and to encourage providers to join the computer age and start accessing health records through secure web portals.