

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Terre Haute, Indiana – September 7, 2011-- -- Indiana Rural Health Association (IRHA) is pleased to announce a new grant award, creating the Upper Midwest Telehealth Resource Center. IRHA applied for federal funding in March of 2011 and received notice of the grant award on September 2, 2011.

The Upper Midwest Telehealth Resource Center (UMTRC) is a consortium of active telehealth organizations, headed by the Indiana Rural Health Association, which provides a comprehensive set of telehealth clinical and technical assistance services leveraged into products of lasting value to rural providers.

The UMTRC will focus on telehealth programs and technical assistance needs within Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio. The UMTRC proposes to provide a single point of contact for telehealth resources across Indiana and the Upper Midwest region through a series of educational and outreach presentations, individualized technical assistance, and archived resources in a highly visible and accessible website and telehealth service registry.

The UMTRC is collaboration between the Indiana Rural Health Association, Community Health Network, Union Hospital's Richard G. Lugar Center for Rural Health, Indiana University Health, St. Vincent Health, Indiana Health Information Technology, Inc., Affiliated Service Providers, Inc., and the Indiana State Office of Rural Health. The collaboration of these entities creates a diverse knowledge base from which to draw information to assist the rural UMTRC service area in establishing and/or improving telehealth capabilities. As the UMTRC develops, partners in the neighboring states of Illinois, Ohio, and Michigan will be included in the project.

Don Kelso, Executive Director of IRHA, states, "By being awarded the Regional Telehealth Resource Center grant, Indiana Rural Health Association is better positioned to do what we do best. That would be bringing together state and regional partners in a collaborative manner to help promote successful use of a rapidly growing clinical technology that will immediately improve the health of rural residents. IRHA started this process by successfully performing a similar service by administering the FCC Pilot Project for Indiana, which has helped bring high-speed fiber technology to rural healthcare providers to provide the necessary means for a successful telehealth process. With so much uncertainty and challenges facing rural healthcare providers and the citizens they serve, IRHA has rapidly become a respected and trusted resource for rural health education and collaboration."

Currently, the IRHA has a successful telemental health network and a successful partnership with Indiana University Health to create the first of its kind telestroke network serving seven of Indiana's Critical Access Hospitals.

The Indiana Rural Health Association is a not-for-profit corporation developed for the purpose of improving the health of all Indiana citizens in rural settings. The Indiana Rural Health Association is a member-driven organization composed of a diverse membership. Matt Serricchio, MPA, MIS, will serve as Director for the UMTRC; and Dr. Jonathan Neufeld, HSPP, will serve as Clinical Director. Together, they bring over 20 years of experience in telehealth,

facilitation, network development, proposal writing, and rural healthcare. For more information on the UMTRC, contact Matt Serricchio at mserricchio@indianrha.org

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