



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Georgia Department of Community Health Announces Georgia Rx Exchange
Exchange Presents Opportunity to Improve Care Coordination**

ATLANTA – Governor Sonny Perdue signed an executive order creating the Georgia Rx Exchange. The Georgia Rx Exchange is an opportunity to support the adaptation of technologies that will facilitate the exchange of prescription (or pharmaceutical) information as a means of improving patient safety, health care efficiency, and the coordination of care across publicly funded health care programs administered by state agencies.

“I applaud Governor Perdue for taking steps that will result in improved health care delivery,” said Dr. Rhonda Medows, Commissioner, Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH). “The Georgia Rx Exchange will provide an unprecedented level of care coordination for patients receiving health care in publicly funded health care programs administered by the participating agencies. This action will impact the lives of patients by providing essential and timely prescription drug information to health care professionals treating patients in our programs.”

The participating agencies include the DCH, Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), Department of Human Resources and the Department of Corrections. The agency Commissioners will be responsible for advising Governor Sonny Perdue on the program’s status and activities, while DCH’s Office of Health Information Technology and Transparency will coordinate the Georgia Rx Exchange efforts.

“Sharing health treatment progress and status information between DJJ and other state health care providers who serve the same youth and families is needed. Information sharing technology is a tool that staff can use to improve continuity of care, therefore we can expect healthier children and families,” said Albert Murray, Commissioner of the DJJ.

Text of the Executive Order is provided below:

WHEREAS: The State of Georgia has historically been committed to the safety and efficiency of care of its citizens who receive publicly funded health care benefits administered by the state agencies; and

WHEREAS: Georgia’s commitment has been exercised through various executive agencies, including the Department of Community Health, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Human Resources, and the Department of Juvenile Justice; and

WHEREAS: Meaningful improvements in health care delivery requires leadership and a multi-focused, multi-agency coordinated effort; and

WHEREAS: Technology and the advent of industry standardized transaction sets have facilitated the sharing of health information among health care professionals in a secure and confidential environment; and

WHEREAS: Prescription drugs are an important tool in the treatment of most illnesses and conditions and the existence of a data exchange program will assist medical professionals in the identification of allergies and drug to drug interactions, avoidance of medication errors, reduction in treatment delays caused by a lack of access to medication history, reduction in duplicate prescriptions and improvement of coordination of medication therapies prescribed by multiple treating physicians; and

WHEREAS: The Georgia Rx Exchange is an opportunity to support the adaptation of technologies that will facilitate the exchange of prescription (or pharmaceutical) information as a means of improving patient safety, health care efficiency, and the coordination of care across publicly funded health care programs administered by the state agencies, including the Department of Community Health, Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Human Resources and the Department of Corrections; and

WHEREAS: Enhancing the continuity of care and the coordination of pharmacy benefits is of great importance to the health care that Georgians receive and is needed for the safe, effective and coordinated provision of medication therapy for patients moving from one state program to another; and

WHEREAS: The Georgia Rx Exchange offers new and innovative ways to improve the effectiveness and coordination of medical care through easier access to the state's preferred drug lists, direct transmission of patients' prescriptions to a preferred pharmacy, increased access to clinical decision support tools, and the sharing of critical health information between patients and providers; and

WHEREAS: The Georgia Rx Exchange program will foster population health through the identification of utilization trends, provide an assessment of community needs, and monitor changes in care standards for patient populations; and

WHEREAS: The Georgia Rx Exchange will streamline the prior authorization process for patients stabilized on a prescription medication; support prospective health care finance planning; and enhance the prevention and monitoring of prescription drug abuse, which are prime concerns that the data exchange program will address; and

WHEREAS: A coordinated Rx data exchange program that involves multiple state agencies is an essential component of electronic prescribing and the management of prescription medications.

NOW, THEREFORE, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME, AS GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA, IT IS HEREBY

ORDERED: That the Georgia Rx Exchange be created to undertake the multi-agency collaboration and continuity of pharmacy benefit care

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: The Commissioners from the Department of Community Health, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Human Resources, and the Department of Juvenile Justice shall advise the Governor on the Georgia Rx Exchange's status and activities; and

These efforts shall be coordinated by the Department of Community Health's Office of Health Information Technology and Transparency.

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