



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 6, 2008

CONTACT:

Lisa Marie Shekell
404-657-9118

Georgia Promotes Health Care Consumerism

Georgia Department of Community Health Awards Transparency Web site Contract

ATLANTA – Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) Commissioner Dr. Rhonda Medows announced today that the DCH has awarded the IBM Corporation the state's Transparency Web site contract.

The IBM Corporation will be responsible for building the infrastructure of the Georgia Transparency Web site for health care consumers as well as providing the nationally recognized health care expertise of the Mayo Clinic.

"The availability of unbiased health information will assist consumers in understanding their choices and in making better decisions about their health care options," said Dr. Medows. "The transparency website will present the information consumers have expressed interest in - easily understood, timely and unbiased care quality and cost information that allows for the comparison of health care providers."

The Transparency Web site will make information on cost, quality of care and availability of services accessible on the World Wide Web enabling Georgia's health care consumers, including Medicaid beneficiaries, state employees, the privately, or uninsured, to make informed choices about their health care. The site will also incorporate disease management and wellness information for users. The Web site will be launched in 2008 through the joint efforts of DCH's Office of Health Information Technology and Transparency (HITT) and the IBM Corporation.

"Consumers and caregivers will be able to use this website as a tool when planning for elective procedures, scheduling diagnostic tests, seeking facilities with specialty services, or planning for long term therapies and medications," said Dr. Medows.

The Transparency Web site is one of DCH's many Health Information Technology Initiatives. Other initiatives include:

- Establishment of a dedicated state Office of Health Information Technology
- Health Information Exchange Matching Grants for Community Partnerships
- Health Information Security and Privacy Collaboration (HISPC) contract awarded to the state of Georgia as part of this 42 state collaborative
- Health Information Exchange Integration in the State Health Benefit Plan, Medicaid, and SCHIP programs
- Development of the Georgia Prescription Drug Data Exchange with the Georgia Department of Human Resources, the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice, and the Georgia Department of Corrections health programs

- Development of a Medicaid ePrescribing program
- Creation of the Georgia Electronic Health Record (EHR) Community Partnership with physicians, health plans and larger employers to enhance the adoption of electronic health records
- Application for the Medicare Physician Electronic Health Record five year Demonstration Project

For more information about the Georgia HITT Initiative, visit www.dch.georgia.gov/gahitt.

###

Equal Opportunity Employer