Statewide Initiative Launched to Help Ensure Patients Receive Appropriate High-Tech Diagnostic Imaging Exams

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BLOOMINGTON, Minn., Nov. 10, 2010 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- A new initiative launched by the Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement (ICSI, www.icsi.org [1]), a nonprofit, health care improvement organization, could save the Minnesota health care community more than $28 million annually, as well as improve patient care and provider groups' productivity.

The initiative is the first statewide diagnostic imaging decision-support approach in the country. For participating medical groups and hospital-based clinics in Minnesota it offers a clinical "decision-support" tool, embedded in their electronic medical record (EMR) or accessible via the Web, so their providers can order appropriate high-tech diagnostic imaging (HTDI) exams while with the patient.

"Use of HTDI procedures such as MRI, CT, PET and nuclear cardiology tests has been increasing 8% annually in Minnesota, and more than $100 billion is spent each year on diagnostic imaging nationally. Yet there have not been enough studies to correlate this increase with improved patient outcomes," says Cally Vinz, vice president of clinical products and strategic initiatives, ICSI. "Our goal with this initiative is to ensure the appropriate use of HTDI exams based on the medical evidence so that patients get better care, providers are more efficient and health care is more affordable."

Based on Yearlong Pilot and Subsequent Two-Year Usage

The ICSI initiative expands upon a pilot involving roughly 4,000 physicians from five Minnesota medical groups—Allina Medical Clinic, Fairview Health Services, HealthPartners Medical Group, Park Nicollet Health Services, and St. Mary's/Duluth Clinic Health System; four health plans—Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, HealthPartners, Medica, and UCare; and the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS).

The pilot was the result of an ICSI collaboration with provider groups, radiologi
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