

**For the EHR Association:**  
Elizabeth (Liddy) West, CPHIMS  
(520) 730-8212 or [ewest123@msn.com](mailto:ewest123@msn.com)



## **Electronic Health Records Association Releases Statement of Commitment on Patient Safety**

**CHICAGO (February 21, 2012)** – The Electronic Health Records (EHR) Association today released its *Statement of Commitment to Patient Safety and a Learning Healthcare System* in response to the Institute of Medicine’s report released last fall, *Health IT and Patient Safety: Building Safer Systems for Better Care*.

"The EHR Association Patient Safety Workgroup and the Executive Committee have worked diligently to gain consensus on our commitment to support a larger ‘learning system’ in which potential safety issues in healthcare environments are reported and analyzed, including those associated with health information technology, in an effort to foster continuous system-wide improvement," said Leigh Burchell, Vice President of Government Affairs for Allscripts and Chair of the Association’s Public Policy Leadership Workgroup. Burchell went on to say, "We are committed, as an association, to partnering with the Office of the National Coordinator and other stakeholders in healthcare to standardize best practices in health IT safety, including definitions and processes, and we hope that our statement sets the stage for collaborative action around this issue."

The statement, available on the EHR Association web site at <http://www.himssehra.org/ASP/index.asp>, describes the Association’s objectives to identify and implement best practices that enable the safest possible development, adoption and use of health IT as an essential component of improving overall healthcare quality and safety, and promoting the use of health IT to identify and reduce areas of safety and/or quality risks.

The Association looks forward to continued engagement with the federal government and other stakeholders to identify specific actions that will expand and foster a broader "culture of safety." Such a culture should incorporate multi-stakeholder engagement to address health IT patient safety as part of the broader patient safety focus, create a non-punitive environment where individuals feel safe in reporting events and "near misses", and provide assurance of appropriate analyses by providers, health IT developers, patient safety organizations and other appropriate parties to determine the root causes of safety events.

"We, of course, read the Institute of Medicine report on health IT and patient safety with great interest when it was released," said Carl Dvorak, Executive Vice President at Epic and Chair of the EHR Association, "and have engaged our member companies

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in many internal discussions as well as meetings with ONC and others to ensure that our collaborative efforts in this area will move the industry forward.”

Some specific activities that the Association recommends in the statement of commitment include one or more demonstration projects that engage all key stakeholders, participation in outreach and education about patient safety organizations (PSOs), collaborative work on a standardized EHR/health IT event reporting form, and promotion of industry best practices regarding health IT-related patient safety issues.

**About the HIMSS EHR Association**

The HIMSS EHR Association is a trade association of 41 electronic health record (EHR) companies that join together to lead the health IT industry in the accelerated adoption of electronic health records in hospital and ambulatory care settings in the US. The Association provides a leadership forum for the EHR software provider community to speak with a unified voice relative to standards development, the EHR certification process, interoperability, performance and quality measures, and other EHR issues as they become subject to increasing government, insurance and provider-driven initiatives and requests. Membership is open to HIMSS Corporate Members companies that design, develop and market their own EHRs. The Association is a partner of the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) and operates as an independent organizational unit within HIMSS. For more information, visit [www.himssEHRA.org](http://www.himssEHRA.org).

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