

Experts Available to Discuss Medicaid, Health IT to See Billions from Stimulus Package Signed by Obama

ExpertSource:

TOPIC:

A recent story in American Medical News (an AMA publication) notes that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 just signed by President Obama includes roughly \$150 billion for speeding adoption of up-to-date healthcare technology as well as providing coverage for the poor and newly unemployed. A notable feature of the package is that health professionals can be eligible for "tens of thousands of dollars in health IT incentive payments via Medicare or Medicaid," though penalties for non-adopters begin in 2015. While physicians must use an electronic health record (EHR) system to qualify for the incentive payments, they need not own one. Private firms are expected to offer financing or leasing options for EHR systems, and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology is due to be offering health IT grants and loans by 2010. Demand created by the health IT stimulus could create a shortage of vendors and consultants with expertise in EHR systems.

EXPERTS: ExpertSource can offer several highly qualified experts to comment on this story:

Blair Childs, Premier Healthcare Alliance: Blair Childs has been at the center of policy issues in Washington, D.C., for over two decades, playing a leading role on issues impacting medical devices, pharmaceuticals, insurers, and hospitals. Childs has been involved in developing and enacting Medicare and health reform legislation as well as leading the medical technology industry's development of a Code of Ethics. He is a respected and well recognized expert on health policy and advocacy. Childs has also held senior management positions in professional, trade, and advocacy associations and a Fortune 100 company. He has been responsible for organizing and leading public policy advocacy programs at the state and national levels on some of the nation's most visible and complex issues over the last two decades, including tort, Medicare, and health care reform. Most recently, Childs was Executive Vice President of Strategic Planning and Implementation for AdvaMed, the Advanced Medical Technology Association. Childs was responsible for the Association's strategic programs and planning. He also directly managed the organization's public affairs, legal, state affairs, membership, and non-dues revenue departments. His work at AdvaMed was instrumental in the association's 133 percent growth over a six year period and in gaining recognition of AdvaMed as a major force in health policy in globally. Some of Childs' more notable roles included running the public affairs department for the Health Insurance Association of America (HIAA) where he organized and served as Executive Director of the Coalition for Health Insurance Choices, which sponsored the "Harry and Louise" campaign on health care reform and generated millions of contacts to lawmakers on health reform. Childs organized and served as Executive Director of the American Tort Reform Association from 1986 to 1989. ATRA was the largest and most broadly based coalition ever assembled, representing non-profit, professional and trade associations with memberships exceeding 50 million Americans. During Childs' tenure, ATRA spearheaded the state tort reform movement, implementing an integrated advocacy campaign that achieved the enactment of major reforms in 42 states. Childs received his Certified Association Executive (CAE) designation in 1988. Campaigns & Election magazine honored Childs as one of its "Rising Stars" for 1996. Childs is an honors graduate of Middlebury College.

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Dr. Chris Hobson, Orion Health: As a primary care practitioner and internist with additional qualifications and experience in healthcare informatics, medical research and business, Dr. Hobson brings international clinical, technical and policy level expertise to bear in designing and implementing strategic e-Health programs. From his background in both developing and implementing successful health information technology, Dr Hobson is well versed in a very wide range of community, hospital, specialist health care and physician HIT systems. His particular areas of interest and expertise are interoperability and solutions to improve the management of chronic diseases through the use of information technology. Dr Hobson served as founder or key early leader in the establishment of many e-Health programs including HL7 New Zealand, CCHIT and most recently the Alliance for clinical excellence. His work has won numerous awards on three continents including for example most innovative HIT programs in the UK, best overall IT project in the entire New Zealand government sector and most significant contributor to the development of technology in primary care. Dr Hobson has 16 years experience in clinical medicine where he was an early pioneer in the use of electronic medical records in his practice in Auckland New Zealand. Subsequently he served as the clinical program lead for integrated care and information technology at Counties Manukau District Health Board, a leading tertiary hospital and health payer organization in Auckland, New Zealand. He oversaw the entire system adoption process, from developing the region's IT strategy, to the selection, development and implementation of the software. Successes included development and implementation of the first web-based disease management and child immunization programs of their kind in New Zealand. In patient systems developed include a hospital wide system for electronic discharges used by physicians and the emergency room white board. As a result of this program, CMDHB moved from being one of the poorer performing institutions in the New Zealand scene to a second place ranking over three years. Leveraging the successes in the New Zealand Health sector, Dr Hobson progressively developed a large number and wide range of health IT innovations that are now installed and widely used in Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, Spain and the USA. He serves as Orion Health's Chief Medical Officer, oversees the clinical consulting team in North America and ensuring Orion's products meet the needs of the North American market. Recently his role has expanded further to include a genuinely global role in the promotion and implementation of electronic health records and regional disease management solutions.

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Ralph Fargnoli, President & CEO, Beacon Partners: Beacon Partners is an established leader in both the United States and Canada, in the IT, strategic, and operations consulting practices within the healthcare industry, was built from the ground up by Ralph Fargnoli, Jr., president & CEO. He would welcome the opportunity to talk with you about industry trends. Fargnoli's in-depth understanding of how a healthcare facility's people, process and technology intersect, offers an unbiased, third-party view about where the industry is headed. Fargnoli possesses over 25 years of practical hands-on technical and hospital administration experience providing him with the foundation to build Beacon Partners from the ground up. Opening the doors with a single service line, Fargnoli recognized early on that in order to be a successful consultancy, Beacon Partners would need to expand its service offerings to include business and clinical operations, information technology implementations, and strategic planning. It is on this premise that Beacon Partners has thrived for almost two decades. With an extensive background in computer systems conversions and implementations, systems integration, operations management and enterprise-wide systems adoption, Fargnoli fundamentally understands the healthcare management consulting business from the inside out. Prior to founding Beacon Partners Fargnoli served as implementation and systems manager for IDX Systems (GE Healthcare) a leading provider of software, services and technology for healthcare provider organizations. Fargnoli is a respected leader with regular speaking engagements and consulting projects with leading organizations such as New England Medical Center, Yale School of Medicine, St. Louis University, and Washington University School of Medicine. Fargnoli also stays actively involved within the industry through his affiliation with organizations such as MGMA, HIMSS, CHIME, and sits on the board of trustees for the CHIME Foundation. Additionally, Fargnoli's writings have been published in such publications as Health Management Technology and ADVANCE for Health Information Professionals.

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Ned Moore, Portico Systems: Ned Moore has been involved in the healthcare industry working with health plans for more than 10 years and understands current market challenges along with their strategic impact. He can speak to the top trends and issues transparency, consumerism and pay-for-performance and how their success hinges on the initiative to improve data quality. As part of his work in the healthcare industry, Ned has consulted with several of the industry top executives regarding industry trends and their strategic outlook. He has also worked closely with healthcare organizations on helping them bridge the gap between business needs and how to apply technology to gain value from their investment.

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