

Medical information network coming to Maine

Health-care providers in Maine on Wednesday unveiled a statewide electronic system for sharing medical information, a network intended to improve the quality of care, reduce medical errors and slow the growth of health care costs. Doctors and hospital and public health officials announced that \$4 million has been raised to begin construction of the nonprofit HealthInfoNet network, which is slated to be launched later this year. The network was designed to give caregivers quick access to key clinical information, which can reduce medical errors and result in better treatment decisions. Experts said much of the patient-specific clinical information in Maine is on paper, making it cumbersome to access and difficult to share. The new "electronic health record" offered through HealthInfoNet will contain information drawn from separately maintained records in doctors' offices, hospitals, laboratories and other locations.