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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 23, 2012

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Alaska recognized as leader in advancing the use of health information technology *Federal government lauds state for reaching two important milestones*

ANCHORAGE — The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services has been recognized by the federal government as a national leader for its efforts to enhance the safety and quality of health care by embracing the use of health information technology.

Health information technologies and an effective health information exchange connect providers, patients and other key health care entities to increase efficiencies, reduce errors and improve patient safety and outcomes.

The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology is recognizing Alaska for reaching Milestone 1 for e-Prescribing and Milestone 2 for Directed Exchange as part of the State Health Information Exchange Program.

- **Ninety-four percent of pharmacies in the state participate in e-Prescribing.** With e-Prescribing, doctors electronically send patients' prescriptions to pharmacies, increasing medication compliance and reducing potential for errors due to handwriting, patients losing prescriptions, or incorrect manual entry into the pharmacy system.
- **In Alaska, 183 organizations are actively using Direct Secure Messaging to share healthcare data including electronic care summaries.** More than 4,000 Direct mailboxes have been assigned to individual users and over 13,000 Direct transactions have occurred.

“Alaska has made significant progress in implementing a health information exchange and continues to move towards a connected health care system across the state,” Alaska State Health Information Technology Coordinator Paul Cartland said. “Better use of health information technology and an effective health information exchange will improve quality, safety, outcomes and efficiencies in Alaska health care by making vital data available to patients, providers and payers when and where they need it.”

For more information about Alaska's Health Information Exchange, visit <http://dhss.alaska.gov/HIT/Pages/Default.aspx>.

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