



For Immediate Release:

March 22, 2007 Des Moines, Iowa



Iowa Health System Deploys Multi-State Medical Health Network

Iowa Health System, Iowa's first and largest integrated healthcare system, announced completion of the first phase of a privately owned fiber optic medical health network connecting major medical facilities and data centers throughout Iowa, western Illinois and eastern Nebraska.

The network includes 2,100 miles of fiber optic network and provides light speed transport for medical information, patient records and advanced tele-health applications. Initiated in May of 2005, the Iowa Health System fiber network is one of the largest private and exclusively medical health networks of its kind.

"We're excited to be on the leading edge of advanced medical information technology," said Sam Wallace, President of Iowa Health System. "This state of the art network is an investment in our commitment to improve the health of the people and communities we serve."

The network is capable of handling multi-Gigabit data transmissions and the bandwidth intensive applications often associated with advanced imaging and diagnostic services. "By interconnecting all of our facilities, we can better utilize all of the resources of Iowa Health System for the benefit of our patients. This can be done seamlessly and securely regardless of which care facility they visit," said Kent Bottles, Vice President and Chief Medical Officer.

Iowa Health System believes this network will provide the connectivity required for the standardization of patient Electronic Health Records (EHR's), a priority identified by the Bush administration. "We want to be proactive in providing the best medical information technology possible, and to ensure that we have the infrastructure in place to support both existing and emerging technologies and applications," said Jim Mormann, Chief Information Officer.

The network has also been designed to ensure reliability and peak operational performance in the event of natural disasters or emergency situations. "We are extremely pleased with how our fiber network performs in terms of speed, bandwidth



and reliability,” said Mormann. “As medical information technology advances, having a secure, robust and resilient communication network is mission critical.” Mormann cites the ability of the network to send and receive information through multiple separate paths as a significant advantage. “We have deployed an architecture that eliminates any single point of failure, and have worked very hard to make this a ‘bullet proof’ network.”

Additional expansion of the network is possible, with the capability of connecting to health networks in other states or regions. “We’re now well positioned to capitalize on a wide variety of regional and national health care initiatives,” said Mormann.

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Initially formed in 1995, Iowa Health System includes 11 hospitals in Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, Dubuque, Fort Dodge, Sioux City, Waterloo and the Quad Cities, along with a group of 450 employed physicians and 125 clinics in 68 communities in Iowa, western Nebraska, and eastern Illinois. Iowa Health System is the first and largest integrated healthcare system in Iowa with revenues of more than \$1.8 billion. For more information visit, www.ihs.org

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