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**Nation's Leading Health Associations, Professional Organizations, Businesses
Join "Health IT Now!" Coalition**
Groups Urge Immediate Congressional Action on Health IT Legislation

WASHINGTON – Fifteen of America's leading health associations, professional organizations and corporations have joined the Health IT Now! Coalition to promote the rapid deployment of health information technology (Health IT). The coalition is calling for Congress to pass Health IT legislation as soon as possible.

The new member groups are:

- The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network,
- The American Diabetes Association,
- The American Heart Association,
- The American Telemedicine Association,
- The Boeing Company,
- The Bronx Regional Health Information Organization,
- The Dow Chemical Company,
- FasterCures,
- Montefiore Medical Center,
- The National Association of Health Underwriters,
- The National Disease Clusters Alliance,
- Nortel,
- The Parkinson's Action Network,
- The Society for Human Resource Management, and
- The Whitman-Walker Clinic.

These organizations join a coalition of more than thirty groups representing patients, health care providers, disease advocacy organizations, businesses, labor unions and consumers.

"We are pleased that these respected and influential organizations have joined our coalition," said former Representative Nancy Johnson, co-chair of the Coalition. "It is time for Congress to act, and these groups will help make that happen."

John Engler, president and CEO of the National Association of Manufacturers, a founding member of Health IT Now!, welcomed the new coalition members. "Escalating health care costs are making it difficult for all employers, including the manufacturers I represent, to provide coverage to employees," said Engler. "That's why NAM is proud to join these businesses and organizations to make Health IT a reality. Technology can help to save money, save lives and fix our costly and troubled health care system."

Health IT brings network and computer technology commonly used in business to the field of health care. Benefits of Health IT include improved patient care, improved support for disease research, lower health care costs, and a significant reduction in the 98,000 deaths caused each year by medical errors.

"A primary issue for us as a nation is ensuring that every child and adult in this country receives the care they need to prevent and treat heart disease and stroke. Health IT shows tremendous promise in helping ensure that the scientific knowledge we've developed is used in day-to-day practice," said Daniel W. Jones, M.D., president of the American Heart Association and its American Stroke Association division.

"It is so important for people with chronic diseases, like diabetes, to maintain a good prescription regimen. With the variety of complications accompanying the disease, an electronic health record makes it easier to comply," said Jim Schlicht, executive vice president of government affairs and advocacy for the American Diabetes Association.

Coalition Co-chair Nancy Johnson said, "By joining our broad and bipartisan coalition supporting Health IT, these groups underscore Congress's need to refocus on the patient-doctor relationship and the information needed to assure care quality. Only if we rebase health care delivery on secure Health IT can we deliver the quality care advances in medicine promised, and affordable care to all."

The Health IT Now! Coalition is urging Congress to pass legislation this year that includes: establishment of a public-private process to set Health IT standards; incentives to accelerate adoption of Health IT; consumer empowerment through patient education tools; and creation of a federal-state process to address privacy and security issues as Health IT is deployed. Health IT legislation that meets these goals has been introduced in both houses of Congress.

Health IT Now! unites patients, practitioners and employers, working together to take the steps to adopt Health IT now to dramatically improve quality of patient care, consumer convenience and patient health while lowering health care costs.

Visit www.healthITnow.org to learn more about the coalition, its principles and its membership. Members include:

*American Academy of Nursing
The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
The American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Homeowners Grassroots Alliance*

The American Telemedicine Association
The Boeing Company
The Bronx Regional Health Information Organization
Consumers for Competitive Choice
The Dow Chemical Company
FasterCures
Genetic Alliance
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
Latino Coalition
Marshfield Clinic
Montefiore Medical Center
National Alliance for Caregiving
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of Health Underwriters
National Association of Manufacturers
National Disease Clusters Alliance
National Medical Association
National MS Society
National Patient Advocate Foundation
National Retail Federation
Nortel
Parkinson's Action Network
Research!America
RetireSafe
Seniors Coalition
Society for Human Resource Management
US Oncology
Verizon
Whitman-Walker Clinic
Women Work!
World Institute on Disability

HealthITNow.org is an organization that educates the public and policymakers on the challenges of our current health care system and the transforming life-saving and cost-saving benefits of health care information technology. As an organization formed within the meaning of section 501(c)(4), contributions to the organization are not tax deductible for federal income tax purposes.

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