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**eRx Collaborative Continues to Lead the Industry with More Than 4.5  
Million Electronic Prescriptions Transmitted for 2006  
88,000 prescriptions changed as a result of drug alerts**

BOSTON — March 5, 2007 — The eRx Collaborative today announced that during its third successful year of ePrescribing in Massachusetts, more than 4.5 million electronic prescriptions have been transmitted through Collaborative prescribers. The program averaged 375,000 electronic prescriptions transmitted each month and increased prescription volume 73 percent from 2005, thus leading the industry with 7.8 million total electronic prescriptions sent to date by the program's prescribers. In addition, the eRx Collaborative deployed more than 1,100 new prescribers last year and recognized and rewarded active users by sponsoring a license renewal upon their expiration from the program.

The opportunity to catch potentially harmful drug-drug interactions or drug-allergy interactions is a hallmark safety feature of electronic prescribing. In 2006, approximately 88,000 electronic prescriptions were changed due to drug safety alerts, with a record 8,600 in December alone. One example of a typical alert is when Zolofit and Trazodone are taken together. Patients need to be clinically monitored to avoid serious or life-threatening increases of serotonin levels in the brain.

In addition, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts last week earned the number one ranking at the second annual Safe-Rx Awards. The Safe-Rx Award is given annually by the nation's community pharmacies to the top 10 e-prescribing states in the nation and to three physicians in each winning state who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in their use of e-prescribing technology. Massachusetts' first-place ranking this year represents a jump from its third-place finish last year.

A recent survey by the participants of the program showed that 80 percent of prescribers report that it is easy to learn how to use the technology, up from 75 percent in 2005. Seventy-five percent of prescribers would recommend the technology to a colleague; and report saving an hour or more per day due to ePrescribing technology.

As a continued leader and industry advocate for ePrescribing technology, the Collaborative formed the MA eRx Steering Committee in 2006. This pioneering collaboration, which includes insurers, technology vendors, pharmacies and other organizations involved in the prescription process, has raised awareness of ePrescribing in the state and is working together to increase adoption.

“The eRx program demonstrates the power of collaboration and harnessing technology to improve the safety of medicine. Tufts Health Plan is proud to participate in the eRx Collaborative, as it brings together scientific evidence and information to support physicians and patients in the safe delivery of care,” says Allen Hinkle, M.D., Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer at Tufts Health Plan.

“NHP is delighted and proud to complete another year as a participant in the eRx Collaborative. We hail the physicians who have embraced e-prescribing. We believe this not only rationalizes the medication prescribing and renewal process, but enhances its safety. Moreover we hope that these physicians' patients recognize and value that they are receiving a higher standard of clinical care in the process,” said James Glauber, MD, MPH, Medical Director, Neighborhood Health Plan

“BCBSMA is committed to improving patient safety and healthcare quality in Massachusetts through the eRx Collaborative. That’s why we’ve launched a patient safety study with Dana Farber Cancer Institute to evaluate ePrescribing’s impact on quality, safety and affordability. We will continue to promote the adoption of ePrescribing by collaborating with other stakeholders in the state,” said Vincent Plourde, vice president of provider services at BCBSMA.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA), Tufts Health Plan and Neighborhood Health Plan (NHP) are members of the eRx Collaborative. The plans formed the Collaborative in 2003 to jumpstart the use of comprehensive ePrescribing technology in Massachusetts. The program offers physicians and other prescribing clinicians the ability to improve patient safety and increase healthcare affordability. The eRx Collaborative uses applications developed by Zix Corporation (PocketScript®) (NASD: ZIXI) and DrFirst (Rcopia™).

ePrescribers are able to access enhanced information when prescribing for patients in participating plans, such as patient eligibility and formulary information. In addition, the program enables prescribers to:

- Access patient-specific drug histories to determine the patient’s current and past prescriptions
- Create new and renew prescriptions electronically

- Send prescriptions for non-controlled substances directly to the pharmacy via fax or by Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and/or print the prescription to paper
- Receive renewal requests from the pharmacy electronically
- Check for drug-drug and drug-allergy interactions
- Access a drug reference guide

The eRx Collaborative will continue to sponsor new prescribers in 2007, and evaluate the best way to expand awareness and adoption of ePrescribing in Massachusetts for 2007 and beyond.

### **About the eRx Collaborative**

The eRx Collaborative was formed by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA), Tufts Health Plan and Neighborhood Health Plan (NHP) with technology partners DrFirst, Inc and Zix Corporation (ZixCorp<sup>®</sup>), (Nasdaq: ZIXI), to collaboratively promote and enable the use of electronic prescribing in Massachusetts to improve patient safety, health care affordability, quality and delivery. For more information, visit our website [www.erxcollaborative.org](http://www.erxcollaborative.org)

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