



Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts  
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**eRx Collaborative Continues to Lead the Industry with More Than 17.8 Million Electronic Prescriptions Transmitted to Date  
Nearly 83,000 prescriptions changed in 2008 as a result of drug alerts**

BOSTON — February 18, 2009 — The eRx Collaborative today announced that in 2008, more than 4 million electronic prescriptions were transmitted through the Collaborative. This brings the five-year total of electronic prescriptions transmitted through Collaborative prescribers to 17.8 million. In addition, the eRx Collaborative deployed 350 new prescribers during the year, significantly surpassing the year's annual goal of 200 new prescribers.

The opportunity to catch potentially harmful drug-drug interactions or drug-allergy interactions is a hallmark safety feature of electronic prescribing. As of December 31, 2008, approximately 82,600 electronic prescriptions were changed due to drug safety alerts, 2 percent of the electronic prescriptions written.

In addition, in response to CMS' e-prescribing incentives announced in July 2008, the Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology (CCHIT) announced a new certification program for stand-alone e-prescribing vendors in September 2008. The CCHIT eRx Workgroup is developing criteria for eRx vendors to ensure that their products meet widely accepted core e-prescribing functionality in 2009 while advancing these systems for 2010 and beyond.

CCHIT expects to publish its final criteria in May 2009, with certifications starting in July. Adrienne Cyrulik, Program Manager at BCBSMA, is co-chairing this workgroup.

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 e-prescribing 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™). The program has assisted more than 5,600 prescribers to adopt ePrescribing since the start of the program.

e-Prescribers 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

In 2009, the eRx Collaborative will continue its efforts to promote e-prescribing in Massachusetts but will no longer sponsor renewal or new licenses. The Collaborative will transform into an educational resource to promote e-prescribing among Massachusetts constituents. Specific areas of focus for the eRx Collaborative will be:

- Physician practice education and engagement
- Vendor education and engagement around deployment of complete eRx functionality
- Consumer education and engagement.

As part of these efforts, the eRx Collaborative is collaborating with the Massachusetts Medical Society to host an e-prescribing conference on March 12, 2009 at the MMS headquarters in Waltham, MA. Titled "e-Prescribing: Essentials and Incentives," the conference will focus on practical approaches to e-prescribing, including how to select systems that meet CMS' Part D standards and how to qualify for CMS' e-prescribing incentives. In addition, the event will offer a variety of specific resources for physicians to guide them in successfully implementing and utilizing eRx technology. Panels of industry experts and peers will share their knowledge and lessons learned with both stand-alone e-prescribing systems and electronic medical records with e-prescribing capability. Visit the Massachusetts Medical Society website for more information.

#### **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®), (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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