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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

\$2.45 MILLION IN GRANTS AWARDED TO EXPLORE HOW TECHNOLOGY CAN CHANGE CARE

Studies Assess the Effectiveness of Web Portals to Manage Weight-Loss and Chronic Diseases

BOSTON, MA, Oct. 4, 2004 –Six new research projects designed to assess the efficacy of web-based patient-provider portals have been awarded grants by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) through its Health e-Technologies Initiative national program.

Patient-provider portals – unique, secure Internet-based sites containing a range of software tools and functions that are accessible by patients and their providers – are gaining popularity. Early evidence suggests that some of the functions being offered via portals have the capacity to improve the processes, outcomes and quality of care for health behavior change and chronic disease management. However, limited research has been conducted to determine their effectiveness in improving the health of the patients who use them.

“We believe science-based research is the best way to ensure families and patients have information and tools they can rely on when their health is on the line,” said David K. Ahern, Ph.D., national program director for the Health e-Technologies Initiative. “The \$2.45 million in grants we are announcing today should help advance our nation’s understanding of these tools. The grants also continue Health e-Technologies record of ambitious innovation and contribute to our clearinghouse of the emerging evidence and knowledge base required to lead the science of eHealth and build better eHealth programs.”

The selected grantees (see attached list) will evaluate the effectiveness of portals as they relate to improving patient-provider communication, containing costs, providing reliable health information, reducing medical errors, and enhancing efficiency. Visit www.hetinitiative.org for more information on the program’s extensive research portfolio and to access the literature library, collaboration community, editorial pieces and a comprehensive resource center.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, based in Princeton, N.J., is the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to health and health care. It concentrates its grantmaking in four goal areas: to assure that all Americans have access to quality health care at reasonable cost; to improve the quality of care and support for people with chronic health conditions; to promote healthy communities and lifestyles; and to reduce the personal, social and economic harm caused by substance abuse -- tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs.

List of Grantees – for project summaries, visit www.hetinitiative.org

Aurora Health Care
Milwaukee, WI
Weight Management for a Defined Employee Population Using an Interactive eHealth Portal
Two-year grant totaling \$398,851
Contact: Dr. Paul Hartlaub

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
Boston, MA
Improving Chronic Disease Care with PatientSite
Two-year grant totaling \$399,980
Contact: Dr. Lisa Iezzoni

Geisinger Health
Danville, PA
Does Access to an EHR Patient Portal Influence Chronic Disease Outcomes? A Randomized Trial Assessing Clinical and Behavioral Change Outcomes in Patients with CHF, Diabetes or Secondary CVD
Two-year grant totaling \$399,028
Contact: Dr. Walter F. Stewart

HispaniCare
Roswell, GA
Evaluation of the MiDieta (MyDiet) eHealth Portal to Facilitate Improved Diets, Increased Fitness-Levels, and Weight-Loss among U.S. Hispanics
Two-year grant totaling \$400,000
Contact: Dr. Dirk Schroeder

The Cleveland Clinic Foundation
Cleveland, OH
The Potential of Technology to Improve Chronic Disease Management and Quality of Care
Two-year grant totaling \$399,830
Contact: Dr. C. Martin Harris

University of Colorado Health Sciences Center
Aurora, CO
D-STAR (Diabetes-System To Access Records): An Online Patient Portal to Improve and Sustain Diabetes Self-Care
Two-year grant totaling \$397,099
Contact: Dr. Stephen E. Ross

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