



# CIMRO OF NEBRASKA 2009 - 2010 ANNUAL REPORT



Resources for better healthcare

## LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

The healthcare industry is undergoing some of the most widespread changes and challenges in decades. No matter the size of your healthcare system, there are external pressures at all levels. The expectations of healthcare providers will continue to increase with payment reform and demands for more efficient and higher-quality care.

CIMRO of Nebraska continues to seek and provide opportunities and resources to assist Nebraska providers to meet healthcare challenges. Good things are happening in Nebraska. We are proud to be part of several innovative efforts to improve patient care. It is reassuring to witness and be part of the level of cohesion among those providing care in our state. These efforts will be extremely beneficial as we weather the storms ahead.

As we approach the final year of the Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) 9th Scope of Work (9SOW), we'd like to highlight the high-quality work being done throughout the state and thank those partnering with us in this quest for excellence. As part of the 9SOW, CIMRO of Nebraska received a subnational contract award to improve care transitions in the Omaha metro area. This project, CareTrek™, has afforded the opportunity for Omaha healthcare professionals to reduce hospital readmissions through improved care coordination. Individuals and organizations working on this initiative are pioneers shaping a key aspect of future healthcare improvement.

Continued improvement is happening in the areas of prevention, patient safety and beneficiary protection. Our prevention work focuses on increasing colorectal and breast cancer screenings and vaccinations for flu and pneumonia. The patient safety initiative aims to improve surgical care, reduce pressure ulcers, restraint use, MRSA infections and promote drug safety. The core of our work is assuring Medicare beneficiary rights are being met through our beneficiary protection program. As a result of efforts, we are seeing improvement in each of these areas.

Health information technology and 'meaningful use' are of primary focus at the national level. CIMRO of Nebraska was awarded a grant from the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology to establish Wide River Technology Extension Center. As the Regional Extension Center, we are now assisting Nebraska healthcare providers to implement and meaningfully use Electronic Health Records (EHRs).

We continue to partner with stakeholder associations to provide resources, tools and training. Our seventh annual Healthcare Quality Forum was attended by over 400 healthcare professionals representing all geographic and clinical settings of the state, making it our largest attended event to date.

We are impressed with the enthusiasm and willingness to achieve higher levels of success within the Nebraska community. The same holds true for those providers and organizations participating and supporting national initiatives, which include the Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes, Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) and the Home Health Quality Improvement Initiative.

In times of change and uncertainty, we find reassurance in the commitment and dedication we see each and every day among Nebraska healthcare professionals. New leadership within the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) brings confidence to the direction we are going. The health and well-being of Nebraska residents depends on the performance of the health systems that serve them and we are proud to be working in Nebraska.

Thanks again for your commitment to quality improvement and for helping us meet our vision of making healthcare in Nebraska the nation's best.

Tina Georgy, RN, MS  
Chief Executive Officer

Greg Schieke, MBA  
Senior Vice President

# CARE TRANSITIONS

Through CareTrek™, CIMRO of Nebraska is helping the Omaha community implement processes to reduce avoidable hospital admissions through improved care transitions. CareTrek partners are working in cross-setting, task-oriented clusters to address problems that have been identified as barriers or gaps, including medication reconciliation and management, post-discharge follow-up and communication of patient care plans.



As a result, the community is experiencing positive results. A sample of successes are outlined below:

Five organizations, including hospitals, Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF) and home health agencies participated in the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) QIO Learning Network Collaborative "Improvement in Medication Reconciliation and Management". This was an opportunity to develop and implement an improvement plan for medication reconciliation and management using evidence-based best practices and improvement tools through a collaborative learning process.

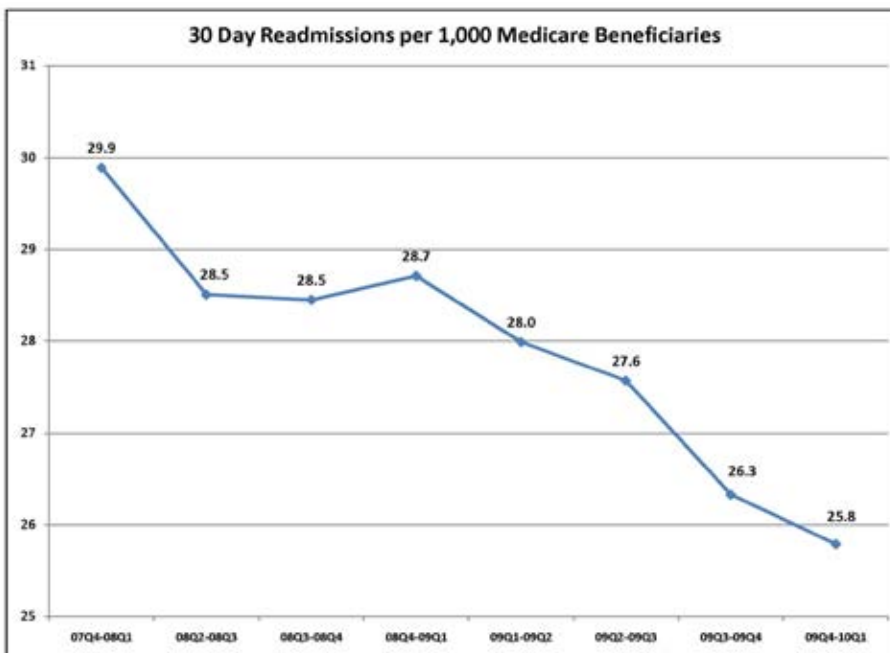
An acute care hospital and four SNFs collaborated in a cross-setting partnership. As a result, communication between providers improved access to the hospital Electronic Medical Record (EMR) by the SNF, improved sender-to-receiver communication and collection of data to identify reasons for readmission from the SNF.

A second acute care hospital has fully implemented the care transition intervention, Project RED (Re-Engineered Discharge). Project RED is founded on 11 discrete, mutually reinforcing components aimed at improving patient safety by recreating the process by which a patient leaves the hospital.

The Care Transition Intervention Model<sup>SM</sup> (CTI) has been utilized by healthcare professionals in the community to assist patients as they are discharged from the hospital. A transition coach works with patients to learn self-management skills to empower and encourage an active role in their healthcare experience. To date, none of the Omaha area patients 'coached' have been rehospitalized within the 30-day readmission period.

CIMRO of Nebraska also initiated a series of learning sessions aimed at improving the skills needed to better care for the post-acute patient. The goal is to help nurses and caregivers address issues identified as factors in hospital readmission.

Combined efforts are making a difference; the readmission rate in the Omaha area is showing improvement (as illustrated below).



CareTrek™ is a trademark of CIMRO of Nebraska Care Transitions Intervention<sup>SM</sup> Model; Eric A. Coleman, MD, MPH

## PATIENT SAFETY

CIMRO of Nebraska's work under the National Patient Safety Initiative is designed to address areas of patient harm by improving healthcare processes and systems. Work toward these goals will affect healthcare programs, policies and practices and will also produce higher quality of care for Medicare beneficiaries and significant cost savings to the Medicare Trust Fund.

A select group of providers has been identified to receive this quality improvement assistance. Working closely with CIMRO of Nebraska, these organizations are utilizing quality measures and metrics to locate gaps in care delivery systems and identify opportunities for creating more efficient and effective care.

The Patient Safety Theme focuses on the following areas:

**Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA).** Hospitals collaborating in this project are monitoring MRSA-related events and reporting to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Healthcare Safety Network, while working to reduce the infection and transmission events of MRSA within their organizations.

**Pressure ulcers.** Nursing homes are working to ensure best practices are in place for the prevention of pressure ulcers. Participating homes continue to share ideas on ways to implement new processes that ensure pressure ulcer prevention is a priority. Those facilities working intensively with CIMRO of Nebraska decreased their pressure ulcer rate from 10.4 percent to 5.6 percent, a 46 percent reduction.

CIMRO of Nebraska partnered with 18 rural Nebraska hospitals to share best practices, tools and evidence-based research to assist with pressure ulcer prevention in Nebraska communities. This initiative was a stepping stone for patient safety and helped lay the groundwork for participating communities to work together to ensure a smooth transition from one level of care to another.

**Physical restraints.** Nursing homes have successfully adopted a resident-centered approach to significantly decrease the use of physical restraints, personal alarms and to mitigate fall risk. This effort has successfully brought down the average restraint rate for these homes from 10.2 percent to 3.9 percent, a 62 percent reduction.

**Inpatient surgical safety and heart failure treatment.** Committed hospitals are identifying potential 'missed opportunities' while the patient is still in the hospital. This ensures patients undergoing surgery or those being treated for heart failure receive the right care before discharge. We have seen marked improvement in all eight contract measures. The hospitals are working at sustaining those improvements and shifting their culture to one that focuses on patient safety.

**Drug safety.** CIMRO of Nebraska has worked to reduce the use of potentially inappropriate medications and adverse drug-drug interactions in Medicare beneficiaries. A technical expert panel provided guidance on which medications to target and what alternative options can be provided to prescribers to aid in this effort. Educational materials are being shared with prescribers and pharmacists across the state. Statewide, the use of potentially inappropriate medications and potentially harmful drug-drug interactions have decreased this past year.



## PREVENTION

CIMRO of Nebraska is working with a select group of ten Nebraska primary care physician practices to increase colorectal cancer screenings, mammography and influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations. Support is also offered to physician practices in utilization of EHRs to accurately capture prevention data and produce EHR-generated reports. Based on data analysis, these practices are implementing processes to notify providers and patients when screenings and vaccinations should be scheduled. These efforts, individualized for each practice setting, have resulted in improved patient care processes and screening efficiencies.

We are partnering with healthcare providers throughout the state to spread the message on the importance of receiving the flu and pneumonia vaccinations. Our campaign "Vaccinate and Communicate" focuses on the need to communicate the immunization status of patients among healthcare providers.



CIMRO of Nebraska continues to facilitate the Nebraska Adult Immunization Coalition through the coordination of its Web site, [www.nebraskaimmunizations.org](http://www.nebraskaimmunizations.org). The site is a repository for flu and pneumonia educational resources, tools and links for both healthcare professionals and consumers.

In our ongoing support of prevention activities across the state, CIMRO of Nebraska also commits staff time and resources to the Every Women Matters Program, Nebraska Stroke Advisory Council, Nebraska Cardiovascular Program, Nebraska Registry Partnership, Nebraska Colon Cancer Screening Program, Nebraska Diabetes Consensus Guidelines and the Nebraska C.A.R.E.S. program.

## PROTECTING MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES

The CIMRO of Nebraska beneficiary protection team coordinates multiple activities to ensure the rights of Medicare beneficiaries are protected and link these activities to quality improvement. Core activities include quality of care reviews, including Medicare beneficiary complaints, review of discharge appeals, review of hospital-requested higher-weighted Diagnosis-Related Groups (DRGs), utilization review and reviews of potential anti-dumping cases.

We have met or exceeded all contract requirements, including 100 percent timely completion of all case review activities. In addition, CIMRO of Nebraska has averaged 97 percent beneficiary satisfaction with the complaint process since the start of the 9SOW.

Maintenance of the Medicare helpline allows CIMRO of Nebraska staff to promptly assist Medicare beneficiaries with inquiries or refer them to the appropriate agency for assistance to resolve their concerns. CIMRO of Nebraska staff continues to maintain timely and appropriate responses to the over 625 calls received on the Medicare helpline since the start of the 9SOW.



## WIDE RIVER TECHNOLOGY EXTENSION CENTER

CIMRO of Nebraska formed Wide River Technology Extension Center (TEC) to serve as Nebraska's Regional Extension Center (REC) for Health Information Technology (HIT) in February 2010. Regional Extension Centers were established as part of the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act.

\$6.6 million was awarded to CIMRO of Nebraska through a four-year cooperative agreement grant from the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC). Wide River TEC was established to assist Nebraska healthcare providers with implementing and using Electronic Health Records (EHRs). Building on current efforts in Nebraska, Wide River TEC is assisting in advancing the emerging e-health infrastructure.

Wide River TEC provides primary care practices with individualized counsel and technical assistance in:

- Selecting the certified EHR product that offers the best value for the practice's needs
- Creating a timeline and milestones for an effective "go-live" implementation
- Enhancing clinical and administrative workflows to maximize the full functionality of the EHR system
- Observing and complying with the legal, regulatory and professional requirements to protect the privacy and security of patient information

Wide River TEC offers technical assistance, guidance and information on best practices to support and accelerate healthcare providers' efforts to become meaningful users of EHRs, as well as the ability to exchange health information with other providers and agencies. Wide River TEC services are available to all healthcare providers in the state, including those who already have an EHR in place. Priority is given to Nebraska practitioners providing primary care in individual and small group practices, Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs), rural health clinics and other settings that serve uninsured, underinsured and medically-underserved populations. Provider education and training is conducted through onsite visits and individualized technical assistance. A team approach is utilized, with highly-trained nursing informatics and technical specialists providing technical assistance.

On September 15, 2010, Wide River TEC hosted an E-Health Forum and Vendor Lab. Over 125 healthcare providers from across the state had the opportunity to visit and experience hands-on demonstrations from 25 EHR vendors. Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy was in attendance and provided opening comments. National and local speakers presented on various HIT topics. Wide River TEC will continue to host educational events and webinars offering assistance and resources to providers.

For additional information about Wide River TEC, visit [www.widerivertec.org](http://www.widerivertec.org).



## OTHER CONTRACTS

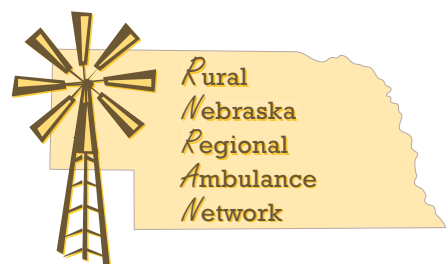
### Healthcare-Associated Infection Prevention (HAI)



Healthcare-Associated Infections are acquired by patients during the course of receiving treatment for other conditions within a healthcare setting. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) - Division of Public Health received funding to provide for a sustainable state infrastructure on HAI prevention. CIMRO of Nebraska received a contract to conduct an evidence-based HAI prevention collaborative with eighteen acute care hospitals in the state. Central Line Associated Blood Stream Infections and

Surgical Site Infections are the focus of Nebraska collaborative efforts. An Advisory Council guides prevention efforts, collaborative activities and data reporting. In partnership with the Nebraska Hospital Association, the initiative will utilize the Comprehensive Unit-based Safety Program (CUSP) Model.

### Rural Nebraska Regional Ambulance Network (RNRAN)



CIMRO of Nebraska provides management expertise and technical assistance for the Rural Nebraska Regional Ambulance Network grant, funded through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

The RNRAN aims to provide better coordination of ground and air ambulance transportation to the citizens of central and western Nebraska through an integrated and collaborative network of ambulance services, hospitals, dispatch agencies and other interested entities.

The Network continues to work towards the creation of a value-driven organization through collaboration of interested persons and entities that are working to provide quality Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and healthcare to the region. EMS reimbursement is a priority. Opportunities to increase revenue to support service providers have been identified. Current efforts have focused on improving the testing scores for certification of emergency responders and improving the access and availability of testing sites. The Network has also provided scholarships to send seven regional EMS providers to educational trainings.

### Rural Comprehensive Care Network (RCCN)

In May 2009, the Rural Comprehensive Care Network received a federal grant to assist in recruiting and retaining patient care professionals in the service area. CIMRO of Nebraska provides process and outcome measure tools and technical expertise in the interpretation of results to RCCN members.

### Informal Dispute Resolution (IDR) Services

Since 2007, CIMRO of Nebraska has contracted with the Nebraska DHHS Licensure Unit to provide informal conferences for IDR requests when healthcare facilities dispute deficiencies cited by the department. A conference provides an opportunity to present and discuss information and materials the facility deems appropriate to support its contesting or disputing the deficiency statement or notice of disciplinary action. Since the beginning of the contract, twenty-four reviews have been completed, including requests for nurse review, physician review, life safety code review and dietetic review.

## 2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



### *Front row (left to right)*

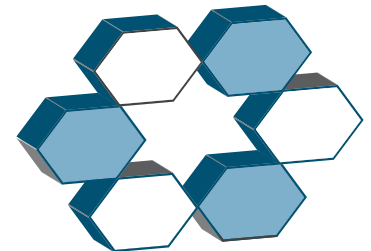
- ❖ Celine M. Mlady, RN, BSN  
Nebraska Hospital Association, Osmond
- ❖ Kenneth Printen, MD - Vice Chair  
CIMRO Corporate Representative
- ❖ Richard A. Blatny, Sr., MD - Chair  
Nebraska Medical Association, Fairbury
- ❖ Pat Snyder, NHA - Secretary-Treasurer  
Nebraska Health Care Association, Lincoln
- ❖ Helene Lohman, OTD, OTR/L  
AARP, Omaha

### *Back row (left to right)*

- ❖ Jeffry L. Strohmyer, MD  
Nebraska Medical Association, Papillion
- ❖ Lois Sietsema, RN-C, CSA  
Nebraska Association of Homes and Services for the  
Aging, Omaha
- ❖ Shaun R. Meyer, RN  
Nebraska Association of Home and Community  
Health Agencies, Grant
- ❖ Kim Moore, RN, MSN, NEA-BC  
Nebraska Hospital Association, Lincoln
- ❖ Colene Hance, MS  
Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services  
Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Lincoln
- ❖ Ronald L. Johnson, MD, FAAFP  
CIMRO Corporate Representative

## NEBRASKA HEALTHCARE QUALITY FORUM

The seventh annual Nebraska Healthcare Quality Forum was held on May 11, 2010 at the La Vista Embassy Suites and Convention Center. Nearly 400 healthcare providers participated. In addition to two national keynote speakers, twenty-four Nebraska healthcare organizations shared insight and information about electronic health records, care processes, clinical care models, medication reconciliation, patient safety and other efforts to improve healthcare in Nebraska.



**Save the Date:**  
**Nebraska Healthcare Quality Forum | May 10, 2011**  
**La Vista, Nebraska**



**Resources for better healthcare.**

1230 O Street, Suite 120  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
402.476.1399  
800.458.4262  
[www.cimronebraska.org](http://www.cimronebraska.org)

***Our Vision: To make healthcare in Nebraska the nation's best.***