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Mississippi Medicaid, Informed Decisions Tally Up the Successful Impact of eMPOWERx™ on Care, Costs

JACKSON, Ms. and TAMPA, Fla. – (May XX, 2007) – One year after putting eMPOWERx™, the wireless patient care program from Informed Decisions LLC, into the hands of its providers, Mississippi Medicaid has realized a savings in prescription drug costs of more than \$1.2 million per month.

The success of the program, which provides point-of-care access to critical drug information, interaction screening tools, current medication histories, preferred drug lists and clinical decision support tools, doesn't stop there. Since rolling out eMPOWERx to 225 physicians who care for Mississippi Medicaid's beneficiaries, the agency has realized:

- Increased patient safety through prevention of severe drug interactions and the provision of clinically relevant patient information at the point of care
- An estimated savings of approximately \$922,000 in hospital costs during 2006 from the system's "high" and "very high" drug interaction alerts
- An estimated savings of more than \$14.4 million in 2006 due to the ability to prescribe fewer and less costly medications
- Prescribers using the system write 20% fewer prescriptions than those prescribers who do not use the system due to increased knowledge of duplications in therapy and fraud.

"Our primary goal with eMPOWERx was to improve the health of our beneficiaries, but we also expected to see a notable decrease in fraud and expense," said Dr. Robert I. Robinson, Executive Director of Mississippi Medicaid. "In one year, the program exceeded our expectations and has earned high marks from our physician providers for its ability to reduce adverse events, increase patient compliance and eliminate instances of redundant services."

Dr. Robinson added, "We knew eMPOWERx had been an effective tool for Florida Medicaid, which attributed a savings of more than \$26 million to the system in 2006, and we were confident that we would realize similar outcomes in our own state. Mississippi Medicaid is aggressively pursuing proactive programs designed to improve the health of our beneficiaries, and eMPOWERx has proven it can play an integral role in achieving that goal."

Using a secure, wireless, Pocket PC/PCS phone, eMPOWERx users receive a real-time, 100-day prescription history for each Medicaid patient. That information is then integrated with Mississippi Medicaid's preferred drug list, as well as Gold Standard's Clinical Pharmacology

drug information and interaction screening tools. eMPOWERx also features e-prescribing capabilities.

“Because the eMPOWERx database is not limited by provider, I can see which medications patients are taking regardless of who prescribed them. As a result, we are now able to keep comprehensive, up-to-date medication lists for all our patients,” said Kurt Bruckmeier, M.D., who cares for approximately 200 Medicaid beneficiaries through Hattiesburg, Ms.-based Pacific Physicians Services. “It has also helped identify drug abusers who would very likely have gone undetected were it not for our ability to evaluate the full scope of prescriptions they were taking.”

John Lee, M.D., who cares for about 10,000 Medicaid beneficiaries in his Forest, Ms.-based practice, says eMPOWERx has helped him avoid duplicating care provided by other physicians and identify instances of doctor-shopping. “I recently saw a patient who asked me to prescribe hydrocodone for back pain,” he said. “When I looked at his medication history in eMPOWERx, I saw he had a prescription filled the day before for the same drug prescribed by a different doctor.”

Participating physicians point out that the success of eMPOWERx goes beyond identifying fraud and abuse; it enhances care by providing critical information on patient compliance.

“I had a patient diagnosed with congestive heart failure who was simply not responding to treatment,” said Michael O’Dell, M.D., of Tupelo, Ms. “It turned out she was not responding because she had not filled prescriptions for the condition, although she had done so for other health problems. Thanks to eMPOWERx, we were able to avoid more invasive, expensive treatment by better-educating her about the condition and the importance of following the treatment plan.”

The success of eMPOWERx lies in the program’s ability to deliver the comprehensive, real-time information Medicaid providers need to make the most informed medication decisions for their patients, according to David Medvedeff, PharmD, President, Informed Decisions.

“The success realized in Mississippi is convincing proof that utilizing cutting-edge technology to arm providers with point-of-care access to tools that help monitor and evaluate patient compliance results not only in cost savings, but more importantly it improves overall patient health outcomes and reduces the potential for drug interactions and adverse events,” he said.

About Informed Decisions LLC

Based in Tampa, Informed Decisions (www.informeddecisions.com) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Gold Standard Inc. that provides a full array of health information technology services to healthcare interests including state governments, commercial insurance payers, pharmaceutical manufacturers and professional healthcare associations. Gold Standard (www.goldstandard.com) is a leading developer of drug information databases, software and clinical information solutions.

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