



## **CMS AWARDS \$3.5 MILLION, 5-YEAR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONTRACT TO NRHI-LED TEAM**

**February 17, 2017 Portland, ME** — The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has named the Network for Regional Healthcare Improvement (NRHI) as a recipient in year one of a potential five-year contract worth \$3.5 million. Under the contract, three NRHI member organizations - HealthInsight, Mountain-Pacific Quality Health Foundation and Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation (Q-Corp) - will provide technical assistance and support to eligible individual or small group practices of 15 or fewer during the transition of Medicare payments from a fee-for-service system to one based on performance and patient outcomes.

“All healthcare is local. The pace of change and the need for support for small and rural practices necessitates strong regional relationships,” says Elizabeth Mitchell, President and CEO of NRHI. “NRHI member organizations are uniquely well positioned as trusted local partners to provide this support as they understand the specific challenges and needs of providers in their regions, and have strong relationships with them.”

Under the contract, the team will work to provide technical assistance, hands-on training, help choosing and reporting on quality measures, guidance on supporting change management, assistance with strategic planning and advice on optimizing health information technology. Collectively, the team will provide support to approximately 7,100 clinicians in a 6-state region encompassing Alaska, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Wyoming.

“Clinicians in small and rural practices are critical to serving the millions of Americans across the nation who rely on Medicare for their health care,” said Dr. Kate Goodrich, CMS Chief Medical Officer and Director of the Center for Clinical Standards and Quality. “Congress, through the bipartisan Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act, recognized the importance of small practices and rural practices and provided the funding for this assistance, so clinicians in these practices can navigate the new program, while being able to focus on what matters most -- the needs of their patients.”

Mountain-Pacific Quality Health Foundation and HealthInsight are both regional health improvement collaboratives (RHICs) and quality innovation networks/quality improvement organizations (QIN-QIOs) with extensive experience providing clinician outreach, education, practice readiness, practice facilitation, health information technology (HIT) optimization, practice workflow redesign, change management and enabling partnerships with local

stakeholders. Q-Corp, another NRHI member, will work as a subcontractor to HealthInsight.

The contract is part of the Quality Payment Program for Small Underserved and Rural Support (QPP SURS), which is formerly known as Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA) Quality Improvement Direct Technical Assistance (MQIDTA). The NRHI year one contract award is one of eleven announced today that total \$20 million. CMS intends to invest up to an additional \$80 million over the remaining four years.

The effective date of the contract is February 16, 2017. You can read the CMS announcement [here](#) and see key elements of today's contract awards [here](#). For more information on the Quality Payment Program, visit <https://qpp.cms.gov/> or contact the Quality Payment Program by calling 1-866-288-8292 or emailing [qpp@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:qpp@cms.hhs.gov).

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**About NRHI**

The Network for Regional Healthcare Improvement is a national organization representing over 35 regional multi-stakeholder groups working toward achieving the Triple Aim of better health, better care, and reduced cost through continuous improvement. NRHI and all of its members are non-profit organizations, separate from state government, working directly with physicians, employers, hospitals, health plans, and patients using data to improve healthcare. For more information about NRHI, visit [www.nrhi.org](http://www.nrhi.org). Follow NRHI on Twitter at @RegHealthImprov.