



Panel: FCC's Broadband Plan Will Boost Efforts to Expand Health IT

Health IT Now! Coalition hosts briefing with industry leaders, FCC Digital Director

WASHINGTON, March 17 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Health IT Now! Coalition hosted a panel discussion today with the Federal Communications Commission and a panel of experts to discuss the FCC's National Broadband Plan and its proposals to develop affordable access to broadband and healthcare. The broadband plan was released on March 16.

"We believe that the National Broadband Plan will make it easier for doctors and hospitals to utilize electronic medical records, which will ultimately lead to improved care and better outcomes for patients," said Dr. Mohit Kaushal, Director of Connected Health at the FCC. "The Plan focuses on the growing need for greater connectivity and innovation."

In addition to Dr. Kaushal, the panel featured John Santelli of UnitedHealth Group; Karen S. Rheuban, MD, Medical Director, Office of Telemedicine, Professor of Pediatrics, Senior Associate Dean for CME and External Affairs, University of Virginia, President, American Telemedicine Association; Hank Fanberg of CHRISTUS Health and Jim Bialick of Genetic Alliance.

Joel White, Executive Director of the Health IT Now! Coalition, moderated the event.

"We hope the National Broadband Plan serves as a driver for both innovation and connectivity, which are two key elements to lowering costs and improving patient care. Millions of Americans have discovered the life-saving benefits of their doctor's use of electronic medical records. We know health information technology will not reach its true potential without full access to broadband services. This is a critical patient priority," White said.

Technology and connectivity are of particular importance in expanding Health IT, the panel said. "We need to continue momentum towards universal Health IT by ensuring doctors and hospitals have access to nationwide high-speed broadband, and the National Broadband Plan is a major step in the right direction," White said.

HealthITNow.org is an organization that educates the public and policymakers on the challenges of our current health care system and the transforming life-saving and cost-saving benefits of health care information technology. As an organization formed within the meaning of section 501(c)(4), contributions to the organization are not tax deductible for federal income tax purposes.