OpenEMR, Open Source EHR Solution, Strong Candidate for HRSA Funding for Health Centers to Expand Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse Services

OpenEMR is a modern, customizable, open-source and ONC Certified Electronic Health Record that can provide high impact and cost-effective information technology solutions to health centers receiving HRSA funding.

RUTLAND, Vt. - **July 17, 2017** - *PRLog* -- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) recently announced a funding opportunity to expand access to mental health services and substance abuse services focusing on the treatment, prevention, and awareness of opioid abuse. HRSA will award approximately $195 million in Access Increases in Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (AIMS) to eligible health centers. OpenEMR, an open-source, cost-effective and ONC Certified Complete EHR, is well positioned for health centers to make the most of this funding opportunity.

The window of time to apply for this funding opportunity is narrow. The applications are due by July 26, 2017. There are approximately 1,400 health centers in U.S. states and territories that are eligible for this funding spanning more than 10,400 clinic sites that provide care to over 24 million people. Each health center can be awarded up to $150,000. Applications are completed and submitted online at HRSA's website , and every health center that is eligible should not forfeit this opportunity to install or improve their EHR implementation.

Awarded funds from HRSA can go towards telehealth, prescription drug monitoring programs, clinical decision support, new or improved EHR implementation, quality improvement, cybersecurity, other training, and/or other health information technology.

This is an opportunity for clinics to install or improve their EHR implementation. The bona fide open-source nature of OpenEMR provides an ideal solution for these clinics by providing a customizable and cost-effective EHR that can successfully endure and grow over the long term for clinics with minimal resources. This opportunity is especially vital for those clinics that were left behind by meaningful use, such as low resource clinics, mental health clinics, and Doctor of Nursing Practice managed clinics.

OpenEMR is cost-effective because it is a bona fide open source product. Open-source software means that the source code is freely available and anyone is free to redistribute and modify the source code. This means there are no licensing fees resulting in radically lower costs. These savings can go towards support rather than paying for the actual software. Additionally, since OpenEMR is not owned by an individual company or vendor, there are over 40 certified vendors and professional services than can provide support. The diverse and highly experienced OpenEMR vendor community provides customers with competitive options to choose from, which drives down costs even further while also eliminating the risk of falling victim to egregious upgrade and/or subscription costs.

There are numerous additional benefits to open-source software. Several of these benefits include transparency, interoperability, customizability and flexibility. The power of open-source code transparency means that the nuts and bolts of the software can not hide behind proprietary walls. This effectively pushes open-source communities towards modern approaches and best practices in the software itself and prevents idling of software in outdated legacy software approaches. This transparency also lends itself towards interoperability since any entity is able to build this bridge rather than relying on proprietary software to build its own bridge. Transparency also eliminates the risk of vendor lock-in which happens with proprietary software when either it goes out of business or fails to keep software updated. Additionally, customizability is a benefit since the customer has full access to the source code. There is also flexibility in

how OpenEMR is installed and maintained with options including local installations that are maintained by onsite IT departments, Software as a Service (SaaS) on a cloud based system that is maintained by a vendor, or anywhere in between.

The cost effectiveness of open source software is widely known by both the private and public sector and was a driver for the attempted passing of the Stark Bill in 2008. Although the most recent opportunity from the government is directed towards eligible health centers, all medical and behavioral health facilities can benefit from OpenEMR. The cost-effective nature of OpenEMR and other open-source health IT software maximizes the use of taxpayer dollars.

In summary, considering the vast range of differing requirements and workflows in the modern day clinical settings, OpenEMR thrives in the current health IT environment due to its cost-effectiveness, transparency, interoperability, customizability and flexibility.

The OEMR nonprofit organization is the legal entity that maintains the ONC certification for OpenEMR, and actively encourages and assists OpenEMR vendors to partner with health centers applying for this opportunity. The OEMR organization has an informative web page for eligible health centers: http://www.open-emr.org/wiki/index.php/HRSA_Funding_of_He...

About OpenEMR
OpenEMR was originally released as an open-source project in 2002 and is maintained and supported by a vibrant community of volunteers and professionals. OpenEMR is ONC Certified as a Complete EHR and is the most popular open-source electronic health records and medical practice management solution. OpenEMR is downloaded more than 6,000 times per month and it has been estimated that OpenEMR serves more than 100,000 medical providers and up to 200 million patients across the globe. For more information please visit http://www.open-emr.org.

About OEMR
OEMR is a nonprofit organization that was founded in 2010 to support the OpenEMR project with a mission to ensure that all people, regardless of race, socioeconomic status or geographic location, have access to high-quality medical care through the donation of free, open source medical software and service relating to that software. The OEMR organization is the legal entity that maintains the ONC certification for OpenEMR. For more information please visit http://www.oemr.org.

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