



Press Release

For Immediate Release
September 25, 2009

Contact: [CDC Media Relations](#)
(404) 639-3286

CDC awards \$ 4.37 million to improve public health capabilities in informatics

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has competitively announced and awarded \$4.37 million in grants to enhance health care information management and to improve the detection of and response to emerging public health threats. The grants will fund four new Centers of Excellence in Public Health Informatics, at Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Indiana University, the University of Pittsburgh, and the University of Utah.

The overall purpose of the center of excellence initiative is to discover strategies and tools that increase the ability of health departments, physicians and other health care providers to promote health and prevent diseases, injuries or disabilities. These centers will support the CDC national priorities. A common emphasis will be translation of results into measurable public health impacts.

“These centers will advance the study and practice of public health informatics through collaborative efforts among academic public health experts, local and state public health departments, developing regional health information organizations, and other health and informatics professionals,” said Dr. Stephen B. Thacker, acting director of CDC’s National Center for Public Health Informatics.

Each center of excellence will conduct two new projects that support national priorities in informatics, and support real-time biosurveillance for potential health threats through immediate access to data from hospitals and health care systems in major metropolitan areas across the nation. The Centers, principal investigators, projects, and overall goals are:

- Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Boston. Richard Platt, M.D., and Kenneth D. Mandl, M.D. 1) Personally Controlled Health Records and Social Networks, and 2) Electronic Support for Public Health: Diabetes Mellitus. These have the major goal of furthering the integration of electronic health records (EHRs) and personal health records with public health functions and outcomes. This builds upon the activities of an existing CDC public health informatics center of excellence to support public health practice to prevent chronic diseases and their effects.



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

SAFER • HEALTHIER • PEOPLE™



- Indiana University, Indianapolis: Shaun J. Grannis, M.D. 1) Bringing Public Health to the Point of Care: Overcoming Digital Barriers; 2) Enhancing Basic Infrastructure Capabilities that Support Public Health Practice. These support the creation of an Indiana center of excellence in public health informatics that will develop and maintain pre-eminent research, education, and practice in public health. The major research goals are integrating health information exchange methodology across private and public health domains and standardization with comprehensive Indiana data sets.
- The University of Pittsburgh: Matthew Wagner, M.D. 1) Automatic Case Detection Using Clinical Data 2) Bayesian Outbreak Detection and Characterization. The goal is to create a center for advanced study of informatics in public health at the University of Pittsburgh. The center will bring together a diverse group of investigators to carry out research focusing on improving the nation's ability to detect and characterize cases of disease and outbreaks of disease as quickly as possible.
- The University of Utah, Salt Lake City: Matthew Samore, M.D. 1) Visual Analytics and Decision Support for Core Public Health Missions 2) Just-In-Time Delivery of Dynamically Maintained Public Health Knowledge. These build on the Rocky Mountain Center for Translational Research in Public Health Informatics under a previous center of excellence in public health informatics grant. The major goals of this center are to address decision support needs for public health professionals engaged in disease control.

Five previously funded centers have become national leaders in public health informatics. Their academic productivity is impressive, having generated over 85 peer reviewed publications, 153 presentations at national meetings, and more than 100 posters and abstracts. They also have contributed to strategic national activities such as the Informatics Grid and the Electronic Medical Record Initiative.

For more information, see: www.grants.gov.

###

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

SAFER • HEALTHIER • PEOPLE™