



## **Pilot to Stop Opiate Abuse/Diversion Launched by State, Holzer and CrossChx**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

(GALLIPOLIS, July 26, 2012) Orman Hall, director of the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, today announced an innovative partnership with health care provider Holzer Health System and CrossChx, located in Gallipolis. The new Biometric Enrollment and Verification Prescription System pilot project will use cutting edge technologies to track health information focused on the goal of patient safety and prevention of narcotic painkiller abuse and diversion.

Joining Director Hall at the announcement at Holzer Health System was Greg Moody, director of the Governor's Office of Health Transformation, Holzer Chairman of the Board Brent Saunders and CEO T. Wayne Munro, MD, CrossChx Chairman Sean Lane, State Senator Bob Peterson (R-Sabina) and State Representative Ryan Smith (R-Gallipolis).

"We are excited about the potential of this new technology to help reduce prescription drug abuse, doctor shopping and sales of medications for the purposes of abuse," said ODADAS Director Hall. "The illegal use of legal drugs in Ohio is leading to drug addiction and unnecessary deaths from overdose. The state's involvement in this project reinforces Governor Kasich's commitment to winning the war against opiate abuse."

According to Holzer Board Chairman Saunders, "The patients served by Holzer Health System deserve the best we can offer in safety measures. We believe this pilot will add a level of security vital to combatting addiction and overdose."

The project will develop a system to allow prescribers of dangerous drugs to use biometric authentication to compare health records from multiple sources to confirm eligibility of a patient to receive a prescription for medication. With fingerprint and photo identification, a prescriber will then be able to receive real-time patient information. At the end of the pilot, a closing report will be submitted that evaluates the effectiveness of the project.

Holzer and CrossChx have committed \$900,000 in resources to this public-private partnership, and the State of Ohio will provide \$500,000 from Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA) performance bonuses that Ohio achieved for increasing enrollment and retention of eligible children in Medicaid.

CrossChx Chairman Lane explained, "Being a native of Southeast Ohio, the fight against opiate abuse is very personal to me. We are honored to bring the CrossChx technology to the region to help individuals and families in the heart of the opiate addiction hot zone."

The secondary benefit to the Biometric project will be the use of de-identified health record information to study behaviors, patterns and demographics for analysis of drug diversion and fraud attempts. This enhanced access to information will support safety and enforcement efforts in southern Ohio.

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