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## **E-PRESCRIBING BRINGS SAFE AND ACCURATE PRESCRIPTIONS TO MASSACHUSETTS HEALTH CARE CONSUMERS**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--**BOSTON, MA – January 13, 2004—After a successful first year, the eRx Collaborative announced that it is on its way to its initial goal of deploying e-prescribing in the offices of 3,400 Massachusetts physicians. As of December 31, 2004, nearly 2,700 physicians plus their clinical staff have signed up to participate.

At the end of 2004, more than 1,500 physicians had the technology incorporated into their practices. The average weekly e-prescriptions written during the last month of Q4 were more than 27,000, a 77 percent increase during the same time frame of the previous quarter.

The eRx Collaborative was launched in October 2003 by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA), Tufts Health Plan (THP), and Zix Corporation® (ZixCorp) (Nasdaq: ZIXI). In August, Neighborhood Health Plan (NHP) joined the Collaborative. This joint initiative offers Massachusetts’ physicians a comprehensive e-prescribing program with the goal of dramatically improving patient safety, improving office efficiency and reducing medical costs.

In appreciation for physicians’ efforts in implementing this new technology, the eRx Collaborative will extend the sponsorship of the e-prescribing technology through the end of 2005.

“We’re enthusiastic about the community’s response to e-prescribing,” said Dr. Robert Mandel, vice president of eHealth for BCBSMA. “In one year, we have succeeded in helping to improve the way providers practice medicine.”

“The eRx Collaborative has established a critical mass of participating physicians who daily demonstrate that electronic prescribing improves the safety and efficiency of the prescribing process,” says Dr. Joseph Raduazzo, medical director for pharmacy services at Tufts Health Plan. “Physicians now recommend electronic prescribing to their colleagues and have created a groundswell of interest in this program. We look forward to more achievements in 2005.”

“We are fortunate to have BCBSMA, Tufts Health Plan and Neighborhood Health Plan as partners in the eRx collaborative,” said Kirk Paul Kirkman, vice president of physician recruitment and retention at ZixCorp. “The response from the physician community has been gratifying, and we remain excited to continue playing a role in the statewide deployment and utilization of e-prescribing.”

This initiative, utilizing ZixCorp’s PocketScript® e-prescribing system, enables physicians to create both new and refill prescriptions electronically, and facilitates real-time access to patients’ prescription history as well as real-time formulary and eligibility information.

ZixCorp conducts e-prescribing demonstrations to physician practices across Massachusetts to promote the technology and provides onsite training and support to encourage greater utilization. Once implemented, physicians access the application via approved handheld devices, as well as through a secure Web site.

Moving to e-prescribing can greatly increase the safety and efficiency of the prescribing process. A 1999 Institute of Medicine report cited medical errors – including those related to improperly prescribed medications – as the eighth leading cause of death for Americans, more than motor vehicle accidents, breast cancer or AIDS.

E-prescribing pilot programs found that 35 percent of prescribers reported patient care benefits due to the ability to check drug interactions and prescription accuracy and an improvement in the efficiency of prescribing, saving physician’s practices up to two hours a day.

### **About Blue Cross Blue Shield**

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts was founded 67 years ago by a group of community-minded business leaders. Today, headquartered in Boston, BCBSMA provides coverage to 2.6 million members. Consistently recognized for standards of service that are among the highest in the nation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts is the choice for health care consumers seeking reliable and high quality health care coverage. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. ([www.bcbsma.com](http://www.bcbsma.com))

### **About Tufts Health Plan**

Tufts Health Plan is a nationally recognized leader in providing comprehensive, quality health care coverage. Recently, Tufts Health Plan HMO has been recognized as a Distinguished Health Plan by J.D. Power and Associates, for providing "An Outstanding Member Experience." Tufts Health Plan is also the first health plan in Boston to earn a J.D. Power and Associates award for outstanding member satisfaction or service excellence for nine consecutive years\*. Tufts Associated Health Maintenance Organization, Inc., Total Health Plan, Inc. and Secure Horizons, Tufts Health Plan for Seniors, have been given Excellent NCQA status. The plan was named one of the top 10 accredited health plans in the nation in the HEDIS® Effectiveness of Care Measure in the 2004 State of Health Care Quality Report \*\*. ([www.tuftshealthplan.com](http://www.tuftshealthplan.com))

## **About ZixCorp**

Zix Corporation (ZixCorp<sup>®</sup>) provides easy-to-use-and-deploy e-communication services that protect, manage, and deliver sensitive information to enterprises and consumers in healthcare, finance, insurance, and government. ZixCorp's secure e-messaging services enable policy-driven email encryption, content filtering, and send-to-anyone capability while its e-prescribing and e-lab services improve patient care, reduce costs, and improve patient efficiency. For more information, visit [www.zixcorp.com](http://www.zixcorp.com).

## **About Neighborhood Health Plan (NHP)**

Neighborhood Health Plan is a not for profit health maintenance organizations serving MassHealth and commercial members across Massachusetts. NHP founded in 1986 by the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers and the Greater Boston Forum for Health Action is committed to providing innovative health care that is member-focused, quality driven and enhances all members' access to quality health care. ([www.nhp.org](http://www.nhp.org))

*\* J.D. Power and Associates 2002 Managed Care Satisfaction Study<sup>SM</sup>. Study based on responses from 27,332 commercial health plan members in 16 of the top U.S. markets. Tufts Health Plan HMO was the highest ranked health plan in the Boston market, which covers Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth and Suffolk counties in the state of Massachusetts. [www.jdpower.com](http://www.jdpower.com)*

*\*\* HEDIS is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)*

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