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Availity Solution is Central to Landmark Initiative, Helps Streamline Health Care Administration and Reduce Costs for Ohio Physicians

Collaboration enables providers to improve health care quality, reduce costs and increase efficiency through automation and simplification of routine office work

JACKSONVILLE, FL – [Availity, LLC](#), the industry's premier health information network, has a central role in a landmark initiative launched Monday in Ohio, where the company's web portal solution will simplify information flow between health plans and doctors' offices, and later between health plans and hospitals.

As announced by [America's Health Insurance Plans \(AHIP\)](#) and the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association (BCBSA), an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans, beginning in early November, the organizations will sponsor regional and statewide initiatives to assess how best to offer physicians access to multiple insurers through the same information channel (e.g., a web portal) for the purpose of conducting key office tasks. Availity was selected to be the solution provider in Ohio, the first state to have portal access under the initiatives.

"Availity empowers providers to improve the quality of health care delivery by allowing them to focus on patients, not paperwork. Real-time access to health care claims information will drive efficiency and generate cost savings system-wide, which directly benefits Ohio's citizens, providers and other healthcare stakeholders," says Julie Klapstein, CEO of Availity.

The Ohio initiative offers opportunities to simplify the work associated with patient visits by providing real-time access to health plan information via the Availity web portal, which:

- Allows office staff to quickly determine key eligibility and benefit information (e.g., co-pays, co-insurance, and deductibles, and differences in coverage for services provided in- versus out-of-network), minimizing time and expense needed for such purposes;
- Gives physicians access to current and accurate information on the status of claims submitted by physician offices for payment by insurers. This will minimize the need for follow up steps by office staff or submission of duplicate claims that delay rather than expedite payment in most systems;
- Tests real-time referrals and timely pre-authorization of services; and
- Provides for the online submission of healthcare claims.

Availity's web portal solution was selected for the program because it addresses the need for [one-stop service in electronic transactions](#)—a process aid for which physicians have advocated strongly. In Ohio, the initiative already has strong support from local health plans and major

statewide physician organizations.

"This project, and the cooperation among so many elements of the health care system, is exactly what our country needs if we're to rein in health care costs," said Tim Cappel, president, [Humana](#) of Ohio. "Avality streamlines an unnecessarily complex system, eliminates duplication and waste, and most importantly allows our health care providers to spend more time caring for patients and less time pushing papers. It's tremendously encouraging to see this level of coordination from so many organizations."

"This initiative is a reflection of our efforts to help reform America's health care system. Improving and streamlining the administrative side of health care is an important part of our effort to help build a sustainable health care system," said Brad Fluegel, executive vice president and chief strategy and external affairs officer for [Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield's](#) parent company. "Every penny saved on forms, claims and administrative expenses is money that can be invested in innovative products and services that improve the health of our members and their communities."

Nationwide, savings are estimated in the hundreds of billions of dollars as the entire health care system achieves efficiencies through similar moves to automation and consistent business practices.

Participating health plans in Ohio include:

- Aetna
- Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield
- CIGNA
- Humana
- Kaiser Permanente
- Medical Mutual of Ohio
- UnitedHealthcare
- WellCare Health Plans, Inc.

Physician organizations supporting the effort and encouraging their members to use the portal are:

- Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
- Ohio Academy of Family Physicians
- Ohio Medical Group Management Association
- Ohio Osteopathic Association
- Ohio State Medical Association

About Avality, LLC – Patients. Not Paperwork.®

Avality optimizes information exchange between multiple health care stakeholders through a single, secure network. The Avality Health Information Network encompasses administrative, financial, and clinical services, supporting both real-time and batch exchange via the web, business-to-business (B2B) integration, and electronic data interchange (EDI). For more information, including an online demonstration, please visit www.avality.com.