



**For Immediate Release**

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## **University Health System recognized for leading & changing with new technology**

(SAN ANTONIO – September 29, 2008) University Health System’s success in going “digital” with the roll-out and integration of key technologies, like an electronic medical record, computerized physician orders and results, as well as a Picture Archiving & Communication digital imaging system, will result in Bexar County’s public hospital district being recognized next month as this year’s recipient of the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives’ (CHIME) and the American Hospital Association’s (AHA) annual Transformational Leadership Award.

This award is given to the one healthcare organization in the nation determined to have successfully undergone a large scale transformation. According to CHIME, the purpose is to honor the organization that has “excelled in developing and deploying transformational information technology that improves the delivery of care and streamlines administrative services.”

Change is difficult for nearly every organization but, as stated in University Health System’s nomination, this initiative re-defined the word challenging: “How do you turn a large county-owned hospital district with an aging infrastructure, a large base of nursing and physician leaders with limited computer skills, and an organizational track record of being somewhat reluctant (if not downright resistant) to change, into an innovative leader in the use of advanced computer technologies to improve patient care, safety and coordination? In the case of University Health System, the successful recipe included a chief information officer with vision, tenacity and excellent communication skills, reporting to a president/CEO who was willing to make a significant organizational investments of time, effort and money for payoffs that would be years in the making, and who was willing to make tough decisions and stick to them, even under pressure.”

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As a result of University Health System's transformational change to go "paperless," nearly 100 percent of patient orders are now being processed electronically. That adds up to about 5.5 million patient care orders and 11 million other electronic documents this year alone.

University Health System continues to expand usage and find new ways to improve patient care. For example, abnormal lab values from patients waiting to be seen by providers in the Emergency Room are now sent by pager to ER staff. Before the new electronic medical record implementation, patients sometimes waited long periods of time to be seen despite having abnormal lab values. Now, abnormal results are acted upon immediately. University Health System averages about 340 pager alerts per month for different types of abnormal lab values.

The Transformation Leadership Award is given to the organization's Chief Information Officer and Chief Executive Officer, who "recognize the need for a strong partnership between its technology team and executive leadership." University Health System President/CEO George B. Hernández, Jr. and Chief Information Officer Bill Phillips will travel to Nevada to receive this recognition at the Annual CHIME CIO Forum on October 24.