TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 14-11
	DATE November 2, 2011

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
            STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS
            STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
            STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD CHAIRS AND
            DIRECTORS
            STATE LABOR COMMISSIONERS
            STATE APPRENTICESHIP AGENCY DIRECTORS
            ALL NATIONAL EMERGENCY GRANT RECIPIENTS
            ALL TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT RECIPIENTS
            ALL COMMUNITY-BASED JOB TRAINING GRANTEES
            ALL DISCRETIONARY GRANTEES

FROM: JANE OATES /s/
            Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department
            of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Efforts to
            Support the Implementation of Electronic Health Records (EHR).

1. Purpose. The purpose of this notice is twofold: 1) To introduce ETA's Competency Model for Health – Electronic Health Records (EHR), a resource for training and upgrading the skills of the health industry workforce impacted by the implementation of EHR; and 2) To provide a *Resource Guide for Health Information Technology,* a tool for supporting the workforce requirements anticipated during the widespread adoption of electronic health records.

2. Background. The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act, enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, promotes the adoption and meaningful use of health information technology (HIT) including the implementation of Electronic Health Records (EHR). The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology's goal is for each person in the United States to have an electronic health record, or EHR, by 2014. The widespread adoption of electronic health records necessitates training and upgrading of skills for health practitioners and support workers who will interface with patients and their electronic health records at the point of care.

The healthcare industry as a whole – and especially the health information technology sector – has great promise for re-employing mid-career professionals with an IT, sales and marketing, or health background. There is an opportunity for the workforce system to participate in the ongoing efforts to prepare this emerging workforce. The supply and demand for these positions is dependent upon the regional economy and its concentration of healthcare industries and subsectors.   ETA is committed to providing you with an overview of this critical and emerging sector and providing tools and resources that will help you develop your own local and regional workforce strategy.

Electronic health records will become the primary means of documenting, transmitting, and securing patient information. The EHR goal will impact the day-to-day work for healthcare providers working in a variety of medical settings including medical and dental practices, rural and urban healthcare centers and clinics, hospitals, and laboratories. Implementing a national EHR system requires a workforce with leadership skills, project management ability, patience, and vision.

However, it is not only healthcare workers who will be impacted. Trained professionals with IT skills, as well as knowledge of the business and culture of health care, will be in demand, too. The following diagram illustrates the intersection of the Health and IT sectors related to the implementation of EHRs and the specific types of workers that will be interacting with EHRs.
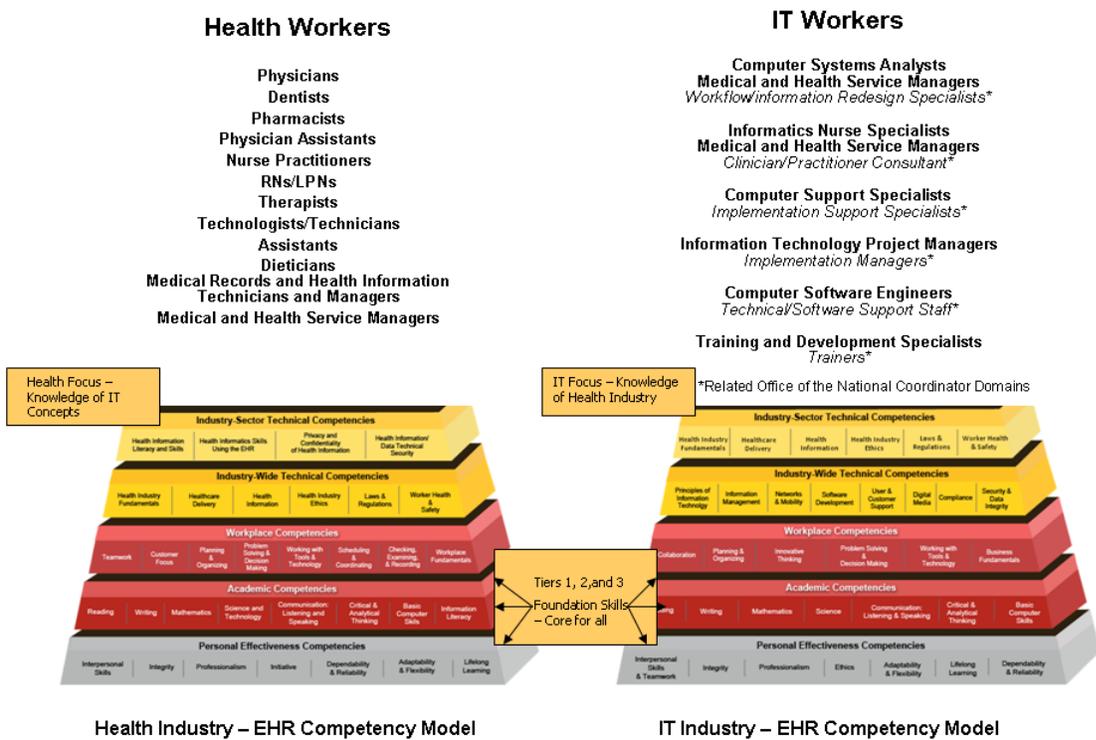
3. Resources. ETA has worked closely with HHS, the Department of Education Office of Vocational and Adult Education, and subject matter experts in the health industry to develop an EHR industry competency model that documents the IT competencies for health workers who will interface with the new technology daily. All of ETA's competency models can be found at the Competency Model Clearinghouse (CMC) Website at http://www.careeronestop.org/competencymodel/pyramid.aspx?EHR=Y.

Local Health Information Technology Regional Extension Centers (HITRECS) offer technical assistance, guidance and information on best practices to support and accelerate healthcare providers' efforts to become meaningful users of EHRs. There are an estimated 70 HITRECs supporting primary care providers in achieving meaningful use of EHRs and enabling nationwide health information exchange in a defined geographic area.

4. Action Requested. States and grantees should distribute this technical assistance information to the appropriate staff and encourage its use in local efforts to prepare the health EHR workforce. ETA is asking for your assistance with two key activities:

First, please share the EHR model and materials with your organization's key stakeholders especially the workforce investment boards for their use in developing workforce planning strategies. The EHR model is posted and available for downloading on the Competency Model Clearinghouse (CMC) Web site at
http://www.careeronestop.org/competencymodel/pyramid.aspx?EHR=Y.

Second, ETA encourages you to collaborate with your local Health Information Technology Regional Extension Centers. See Attachment B for a complete list of HITRECs to determine if there is a center in your vicinity. If you have a HITREC in your region, we encourage you to convene interested stakeholders as soon as possible including health care employers, State Offices of Rural Health, and educators to discuss this critical workforce:

- Describe the types of occupations associated with Health IT/EHR professions and the skills needed to perform successfully in these roles;
- Locate sources of Health IT/EHR training, assessment vouchers and employment opportunities; and
- Learn about transferrable skills and work experiences from a prospective Health IT employer using the Health – EHR competency model.

5. Inquiries. Questions concerning this Training and Employment Notice should be directed to businessrelations@dol.gov.

6. Attachments.
Attachment 1: The EHR Competency Model is a resource for program planners, curriculum developers, and business service representatives in articulating the changing needs of the healthcare workers who will be impacted by the implementation of EHR.

Attachment 2: A *Resource Guide for Health Information Technology* is a reference providing program planners and service providers with practical information about the HHS Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology and its initiatives and grant investments to prepare the emerging Health-IT workforce.