MEDIA ADVISORY--PRESS CONFERENCE

OSU MEDICAL CENTER TO UNVEIL NEW MEDICAL COMPUTER NETWORK

Physicians and staff of The Ohio State University medical center will demonstrate a new, powerful medical computer network—the first of its kind in Ohio—during a press conference Tuesday, June 8, at 11:30 a.m. in Rhodes Hall Room S-131, 450 W. 10th Ave.

The Central Ohio Medical Information Network (COMIN) links Ohio State physicians via computer and phone line with their fellow physicians in central Ohio. The connection accommodates quick and accurate exchange of medical information on patients in The Ohio State University Hospitals or the Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Research Institute. The network also gives participants access to Ohio State's Health Sciences Library and information on University continuing medical education programs.

Excellent photo and video opportunities are expected. Ohio State physicians and other network users will be present to demonstrate the network and answer questions. Also attending will be representatives from Integrated Medical Systems, Inc., the company that created the software for the network and operates 22 similar networks throughout the United States.

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Contact: Dave Irwin or Elizabeth Samuels, Hospitals Communications, 293-3737.
OSU Hospitals joins linkup to get medical data through phone

By Matt Krantz
Dispatch Staff Reporter

Ohio State University Hospitals will be the first in Ohio to use a medical information highway, with the hopes of reducing paper traffic.

The Central Ohio Medical Information Network, or COMIN, has been under development since February and is now ready to go online, said Pamela Ancona Edison, coordinator of the network for OSU.

COMIN will allow the OSU Hospitals and Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital to send patient information using the phone lines instead of the mail, she said.

Insurance companies, labs, pharmacies, outside doctors and other hospitals will be able to receive patient data instantly from the OSU databases, she said. The system now is being marketed to those potential users.

Under a contract with the system's creator, OSU will pay $145,000 a year for five years.

In addition to sending text such as letters and memos, COMIN handles voice and still video images as well.

Before the end of the year, the system will allow a patient's X-ray to be fed into a computer at one hospital and then sent to a doctor at another hospital, Edison said.

Doctors linked to the system will also be able to read the latest medical journals, she said.

There will be benefits for patients as well, Edison said. COMIN will unite the hospitals, doctors and insurance companies, allowing for quicker service and greater information flow.

OSU Hospitals has signed a five-year contract with Integrated Medical Systems, a Columbus-based data processing company, to set up and maintain the system.

The company has created 22 similar networks nationwide, said district manager Rebecca Armato.

The company is now promoting the system to other hospitals, insurance companies and physicians, trying to persuade them to join, Armato said.

Doctors are able to get on-line with COMIN if they have an IBM-compatible personal computer, a phone line and a modem.

"We expect to save enough in annual paper and postage costs to recoup the $145,000 yearly fee we will pay to participate in COMIN," said Gerald Mauer, associate executive director of OSU Hospitals.