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For Immediate Release

Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre connects to diagnostic imaging network

June 21, 2010 – (Thunder Bay, ON) - Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC) and 11 allied sites are now sending patient information to the Northern and Eastern Diagnostic Imaging Network (NEODIN), a repository of medical images and associated diagnostic reports that will connect to hospitals throughout northern and eastern Ontario.

NEODIN will improve health care delivery by providing doctors with access to diagnostic images from many facilities, allowing them a more comprehensive view of a patient's diagnostic history.

Ultimately, NEODIN will connect a large portion of Ontario. When completed in 2011, more than 60 diagnostic imaging departments from the North West, North East and Champlain LHINs, servicing almost two million people across 840,000 square kilometres from the Manitoba border in the west to Cornwall and Hawkesbury in the east, will be able to seamlessly share patient images and reports.

Canada Health Infoway (*Infoway*) has provided \$21.7 million and eHealth Ontario has provided \$20 million in funding to support the project, which is part of the Ontario government's ehealth agenda and *Infoway's* vision for a pan-Canadian electronic health record system.

"This project is an important part of a broader initiative to equip health providers and patients from across Canada with electronic health records," said Richard Alvarez, President and CEO of Canada Health Infoway. "Authorized doctors anywhere in the network will be able access their patients' diagnostic test results, allowing them to share and consult with specialists more easily, make diagnoses sooner and get patients treated more quickly."

"We are proud to provide the network and be a funding partner on an initiative which advances health care delivery and benefits Ontarians," said Greg Reed, President and CEO, eHealth Ontario. "This project illustrates how collaboration within the health care system can improve patient care."

Ron Saddington, CEO of TBRHSC agreed, saying, "On behalf of all of our regional partners, I am pleased to see the Northwest hub go live with the NEODIN project. This is another great demonstration of how patient care can be improved when health care providers and funders work together."

NEODIN is one of four diagnostic imaging repositories (DI-r) being implemented in Ontario. A DI-r, enables diagnostic images and reports to be shared between facilities, eliminating the need for patients

NEODIN / RIDNEO - Sault Area Hospital / Hôpital de Sault-Sainte-Marie

969 Queen St. East / 969, rue Queen Est Sault Ste. Marie ON P6A 2G4

P 705.759.3434 (5499) F 705.759.3639



to transport images and reports between doctors on CDs, films, or by fax. It also allows specialists at one facility to access the reports for images acquired at other hospitals allowing for faster and more convenient information sharing between doctors. This improved access to patient information will help health care providers make more informed and timely medical decisions. In addition to improving medical access to patient information, it is anticipated that NEODIN will help reduce duplicate testing that results from lost, misplaced or otherwise unavailable images.

According to Bruce Sutton, one of the management sponsors of NEODIN and CIO of TBRHSC and St. Joseph’s Care Group, "We are making excellent progress on NEODIN, thanks to the great project team, an engaged vendor and the support from Canada Health Infoway and eHealth Ontario. TBRHSC is the eighth hub to go live and is significant because it covers the largest area of any of the fifteen hubs."

Canada Health Infoway is an independent, not-for-profit organization funded by the federal government. *Infoway* jointly invests with every province and territory to accelerate the development and adoption of electronic health record projects in Canada.

From an operations perspective, the NEODIN DI-r will help eliminate costly disaster recovery and redundancy currently managed by each individual hospital. The hub and spoke model which pairs small facilities to larger ones allows for cost effective strategies of larger sites maintaining PACS Administration and DI-r admin services to small sites who otherwise cannot afford to dedicate full time IS PACS resources.

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For more information please contact:

NEODIN	Canada Health Infoway	eHealth Ontario
Rob McLellan	Dan Strasbourg	Heather Brown
Communications Lead	Director, Corporate Communications	Communications Advisor
416-768-2841	(416) 595-3424	416-586-4238