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**Statement on HHS Announcement of Contract to the *Connecting for Health* team to Develop Nationwide Health Information Network**

***Carol Diamond, MD, Managing Director of the Markle Foundation;  
Chair, Connecting for Health***

**Background**

Michael O. Leavitt, U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, announced the award of a contract today to the Connecting for Health team to make its three-community health information exchange a prototype for nationwide health information exchange. The Secretary also awarded 3 other related contracts today to develop the nationwide electronic exchange of health information.

**Statement**

New York, NY (November 10, 2005) – "*Connecting for Health* applauds Secretary Leavitt for moving the nation much closer to the day when patients and medical professionals will be able to exchange potentially lifesaving health information in a secure and private manner. By selecting *Connecting for Health's* three-community electronic health information exchange to serve as a prototype for the nation, the Secretary has acknowledged the major contribution made to health information technology by the hundreds of organizations involved in *Connecting for Health*. With the support of the federal government, *Connecting for Health* will help deliver what the American people want -- a fully connected health care system in the 21st century."

- Carol Diamond, M.D., Managing Director, Markle Foundation; Chair, Connecting for Health

**About Connecting for Health**

Connecting for Health is committed to accelerating the development of a health information-sharing environment by bringing together an array of private, public, and not-for-profit groups to develop common standards. Connecting for Health

also works to overcome the technical, financial, and policy barriers to bringing health care into the information age. As one of its first steps, Connecting for Health convened a group of leading government, industry, and health care experts, who have shaped and led the national debate on electronic clinical data standards. The group forged consensus on the adoption of an initial set of standards, developed case studies on privacy and security, and helped define the electronic personal health record. For more information, visit [www.connectingforhealth.org](http://www.connectingforhealth.org).

### **About the Markle Foundation**

Emerging information and communication technologies possess enormous potential to improve people's lives. The Markle Foundation works to realize this potential by accelerating the use of these technologies to address critical public needs, particularly in the areas of health and national security. The Markle Foundation's overarching goal in the health area is to accelerate the rate at which information technology enables consumers and the health system that supports them to improve health and health care. The Foundation's goal is to ensure that the extraordinary potential of 21st -century information technology to improve the health and health care of all is translated into everyday use as quickly and effectively as possible. For more information, see [www.markle.org](http://www.markle.org).