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**The HCC Receives \$125,000 Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant from the USDA
Pathways and Lafayette Regional Collaborate to Increase Access to Care**

(October 27, 2011) Lexington, MO – When it comes to technology, Lexington MO is making huge strides. Whether it's health information technology like electronic medical records, telehealth, telemedicine or even distance learning—these technological advances are available and accessible—right now.

The Health Care Coalition of Lafayette County was awarded a \$125,000 Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant from the United States Department of Agriculture. The grant will support education, training and improve the delivery of patient care at Pathways Community Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. and Lafayette Regional Medical Center.

“Rural communities sometimes miss out on the latest technological advances in health care,” said HCC’s Executive Director, Toniann Richard. “The HCC continues to provide avenues for Lafayette County and surrounding areas to not only take advantage of cutting-edge technology but to be major players in these advancements that improve how we learn and how we live.”

Improving how we live begins with quality health care. Coalition members Pathways and LRHC, benefactors of the grant, are collaborating to improve patient outcomes. Pathways and LRHC are coordinating patient care to treat the whole individual and improve the patient’s physical and emotional health. This approach is sometimes referred to as a “health care home model.”

“Pathways has undertaken steps to provide both clinical and psychiatric services remotely,” said Richard Colvert, chief information officer at Midwest Behavioral Healthcare Management, Inc. “Services that were once unattainable to residents locally will be accessible through a partnership with the HCC and Lafayette Regional Health Center.”

“This grant is a big first step in establishing telehealth in Lafayette County,” said Darrel Box, vice president of LRHC. “The telehealth collaboration with Pathways removes a major access barrier to mental health care in Lafayette County.”

For more information, contact Toniann Richard at 660.259.2440. To learn more about health information technology, visit HCCNetwork.org/health-it.

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About the HCC

The Health Care Coalition of Lafayette County collaborates with area agencies, businesses and other non-profits to advocate for the health and well being of Lafayette County residents. Among HCC’s current programs are:

- Health information technology initiatives to equip health care providers with the resources needed to offer telemedicine and telehealth services that increase patient access to quality health care;
- Social Innovation for Missouri (SIM) that addresses tobacco cessation and obesity prevention; among other programs; and
- Rural Missouri Health Co-op—with a workplace wellness component—aimed at creating a healthier workforce and reducing insurance premiums.

To learn more, visit HCCNetwork.org, WellnessWorks.HCCNetwork.org, 4everfit.HCCNetwork.org or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

