

Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network

THE ADVANTAGE

The option of external peer review is one that can meet the needs of rural, critical access hospitals to expand their internal peer review program at a reasonable cost and with a minimum of turnaround time. The EPR Network program is an independent, confidential process you can use to strengthen your existing internal program. ICAHN is committed to offering business products that provide value to its clients.

For more information on the External Peer Review Network (EPRN), contact Don Evans at 815-875 2999 or by email at devans@icahn.org

External Peer Review Network Program (EPRN)

for

Michigan Critical Access Hospitals



Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network

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*An independent, confidential process that can
enhance and strengthen your internal peer
review program*

The Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network (ICAHN) understands the that the delivery of quality patient care is paramount to your hospital, medical staff and your community. Your internal peer review process is one aspect of monitoring the quality of care your hospital provides. An opportunity exists to enhance and strengthen your internal program through an external peer review network (EPRN) program. Here's how the program works.

THE PROGRAM

The Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network (ICAHN) has established an external peer review (EPR) process to assist hospitals with:

- *Improving the quality of care provided by the medical staff*
- *Monitoring the performance of the medical staff*
- *Identifying areas for performance improvement*

The EPR process may be accessed when a hospital's internal peer review process has concluded:

- *There is a conflict of interest for available reviewers*
- *That available reviewers do not have the clinical expertise necessary for peer review*
- *That ambiguous or conflicting findings are present*
- *There is a lack of strong consensus for a finding*

Prior to accessing the EPR process, hospitals must have signed the **ICAHN External Peer Review Agreement** and **HIPAA Business Associate Contract Addendum**.

EPR will be completed by a member of a panel of physician reviewers. Panel members are selected based on the following criteria:

- *Active medical staff status at ICAHN member hospital*
- *Five years of rural medicine experience, if not eligible for board certification*
- *Three years of rural medicine experience, if board eligible*
- *1 year of rural experience, if board certified*
- *Letter of nomination/recommendation from hospital CEO*
- *Completed application verifying credentials, data bank requirements and contact information*

Specialties included on the physician review panel:

<i>Family Practice</i>	<i>General Surgery</i>	<i>Radiology</i>
<i>Internal Medicine</i>	<i>Pediatrics</i>	
<i>OB/GYN</i>	<i>Emergency Medicine</i>	

EPRN panel members will sign a **Consulting Agreement** outlining confidentiality and indemnification responsibilities as well as complete an education program prior to conducting medical case reviews. An ICAHN Network Committee provides ongoing over sight to the program.

THE PROCESS

1. Hospital completes its internal peer review process and determines an external peer review is needed for a specific medical case.
2. The EPRN Coordinator at the hospital completes the EPR request form and forwards it (fax) to the ICAHN office.
3. ICAHN selects an EPRN physician panel member to conduct the external peer case review and notifies the EPRN coordinator at the requesting hospital.
4. The requesting hospital sends a copy of the medical record by certified mail to the physician reviewer's hospital along with the EPR report form.
5. The physician reviewer will have 10 working days to evaluate the medical record. Once the physician has completed the review, the medical record is shredded and the EPR physician report form is forwarded by mail to the requesting hospital.
6. The requesting member hospital utilizes the case review findings to complete its internal peer review process.
7. There is a \$200.00 fee for each medical record reviewed by the EPRN physician panel.
8. The hospital must designate an EPRN Coordinator to serve and function as the hospital's liaison and representative to coordinate the external peer review process with ICAHN and the Physician Reviewer assigned by ICAHN.
9. The Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network (ICAHN) provides administrative professional liability insurance for approved EPRN physician reviewers to cover their professional recommendations and case findings. ICAHN maintains its own liability insurance to cover staff participation and administration of the program.