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RTZ ASSOCIATES, INC.

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RTZ Awarded National Institutes of Health Phase II Grant

RTZ Associates, Inc. is pleased to announce the award of a prestigious Phase II National Institutes of Health grant. The National Institutes of Health has chosen RTZ to develop an information system for community long-term care across waiver programs. The state-of-the-art, integrated system will be developed from RTZ's MSSPCare and PACECare enterprise systems and will enable users to collect comparable data across sites, program and states. The resulting system will also include enhanced medication tracking and alert capabilities.

MSSPCare, now used by 50% of California Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) sites, is used for multi-agency care planning, service scheduling, service authorization and budgeting, cost-tracking, progress notes and outcome reporting. PACECare, now used by approximately 30% of Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) sites nationwide, combines in one integrated system service scheduling and case management functions with medical and supportive services tracking.

Currently, there is a national and state effort to compare long-term care programs, evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and develop best practice models. "The comparison of programs requires comparable data - a number of organizations are looking to MSSPCare and PACECare for that data," said Rick Zawadski, Ph.D., RTZ Associates President. "The proposed project will answer this need by strengthening and refining MSSPCare and PACECare and by spearheading a common core data set between brokerage and consolidated models of service delivery."

In collaboration with the Partners in Care Foundation (PICF) and the Institute on Aging (IOA), RTZ will expand current systems to build a common data set across waiver and other service programs. RTZ will also use the new system to address proper medication management in long-term care consumers. Drug interaction detection tools will be incorporated into the system, then used to analyze drug outcomes and track overmedication and medication error in consumers. The Partners in Care Foundation, both a key collaborator and the site of an MSSP program, has identified medications management as a priority issue for their client population. This issue has recently become more pressing due to the Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act (MMA), which renders prescription drugs more accessible than ever to Medicare recipients.

The project also promises to have significant commercial impact. RTZ's previous Phase II award was used to create CADCare, a system that now serves over 350 Adult Day Health sites in 32 states.

The new, state-of-the-art system will:

1. Improve assessments by:

- Developing a common core data set, compatible with the Minimum Data set for Homecare Assessments (MDS–HC), for comparing client characteristics, level of need, services costs and outcomes across MSSP and PACE.

2. Improve Medication Tracking by:

- Incorporating a drug interaction detection system for alerting clinical staff to dangerous interactions and for generating analyzable health outcome data across programs.

3. Improve data integration across:

- Disciplines and functions within MSSP, PACE and waiver programs.
- Multiple sites of the same program type.
- The spectrum of brokerage and consolidated models of service delivery.

4. Improve program management and quality by:

- Preparing cross-site summary reports describing client characteristics, needs, services and costs for each service model.
- Comparing client populations and outcomes by programs.
- Preparing Benchmark Reports for the comparison of individual sites to other like programs, identifying areas of relative strength and weakness.

5. Improve clinical practice by:

- Developing medication algorithms to detect medication problems – redundant medications and potentially dangerous interactions.
- Study the impacts of the medication problem detection software on prescription patterns and client outcomes.

About RTZ Associates

RTZ Associates, Inc. has provided cutting-edge technology to the nation's caregivers for more than 25 years. In addition to its information systems work, RTZ Associates offers a range of services that enhance system functionality and usefulness. RTZ brings to its projects 25 years of experience in LTC program planning, financing system development, fund development, state and federal reporting, and long term care research.

RTZ's growing client base reaches across more than 32 states. In California alone, RTZ's HOMCarefds manages IHSS provider benefits for a total of 167,446 providers. In San Francisco, GetCare's CARETool is being used by over 135 programs and over 200 users to record and track client identification, assessment and service information for over 22,000 clients. Arkansas' GetCare system contains information on over 3,078 services, and manages service enrollments for approximately 20,000 consumers.

For more information, visit rtzassociates.com or call 510-986-6700.