



A. JOHN BLAIR III, M.D.

A. John Blair believes strongly in the power of technology to improve healthcare—so strongly that when he joined the Taconic IPA three years ago, it was with the understanding that a technology initiative would soon be under way. The Taconic Health Information Network (THIN) is that initiative.

A physician-driven network focused on technology designed to deliver a narrow, yet rich, band of functionality, THIN is working toward a full electronic health record via a stepwise strategy. It is constructing a communitywide data exchange network, to include hospitals, laboratories and pharmacies. Clinical messaging is now operative, with e-prescribing slated for 2005.

At the outset, Blair says, he and his colleagues recognized that their region needed to be digitized, but they also realized “the great difficulties of physician adoption, technology costs and integrating the community” that they faced. Now they’ll have some financial help in overcoming problems. THIN is one of nine organizations recently chosen by the Foundation for eHealth Initiative to receive funding as part of its “Connecting Communities for Better Health” program.

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