

ALLENTOWN, Pa., Sept. 17, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Governor Tom Corbett visited Lehigh Valley Hospital-Cedar Crest today and participated in a telemedicine demonstration as part of a four-day tour across the state to roll out his

Healthy Pennsylvania plan.

Corbett's *Healthy Pennsylvania* plan focuses on improving access, ensuring quality, and providing affordability through a variety of initiatives such as promoting primary care and health information technology, convening a *Healthy Pennsylvania* Summit, and reforming Pennsylvania's Medicaid program.

The full plan can be viewed online at www.pa.gov.

During his visit today, Corbett met with an emergency room employee from Hazleton General Hospital who became a patient herself after experiencing blood clots that led to a stroke. Through Lehigh Valley Health Network's (LVHN) telemedicine partnership with Hazleton General Hospital, she was diagnosed quickly through the use of cloud technology by a stroke specialist at Lehigh Valley and received life-saving treatment. Her personal experience underscores the ability of telemedicine to provide specialized and timely care to rural and underserved areas of the state.

While at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Cedar Crest, Corbett and Secretary of Health Michael Wolf also joined in a live telemedicine demonstration. Wolf participated as a patient for the demonstration in Hazleton and was "treated" by staff from LVHN for a burn. Corbett listened to Wolf's heartbeat remotely from the Lehigh Valley Hospital-Cedar Crest location.

"Telemedicine is an example of how my *Healthy Pennsylvania* plan will help bring high quality health care to all Pennsylvanians by bringing patients and specialists from our world-class health networks closer together through the use of technology," Corbett said. "Not only does telemedicine improve quality while also lowering costs, more importantly, it helps ensure quicker diagnoses and treatment options for those who need it most in remote and underserved areas of the state, also lowering stress for patients and their families."

Throughout this year, the Corbett Administration has been engaging stakeholders, including hospitals, from across the state to determine best practices for using and expanding Pennsylvania's current telemedicine networks and services. Corbett plans to continue this work and apply for federal funding to assist in the expansion of telemedicine efforts and help bring specialty and follow-up care to all Pennsylvanians.

"I want to thank Governor Corbett for recognizing the value of telemedicine in offering a unique approach to access to care by virtually connecting patients in their community to medical specialists who aren't available to them locally," Dr. Ronald Swinfard, LVHN's president and chief executive officer said.

"Telemedicine improves the quality of care for patients with potentially serious conditions like stroke, burn or an infectious disease. It's also helpful for mothers with high-risk pregnancies and for many other conditions. Depending on the diagnosis, this important tool also can ease the burden on families by ensuring that their loved one can be treated in their hometown instead of being transferred elsewhere for care," Swinfard said.

Also joining for today's demonstration in Hazleton was Sen. John T. Yudichak (D-Luzerne) and Rep. Tarah Toohil (R-Luzerne).

For more information, visit www.pa.gov

Governor Corbett Continues Healthy Pennsylvania Tour, Participates in Telemedicine Demonstration

Written by Australian Business

Media contact: Lynn Lawson or Christine Cronkright, 717-783-1116
Tysarczyk
, Dept. of Health, 717-787-1783

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