

**Idaho County Free Press, Friday, May 13, 2011 -- by Lorie Palmer**

## **Syringa working through phase 1 of EHR**

"This is all part of health reform," said David Roberts of Cerner Corporation. "It's a dynamic, growing process meant to improve quality and outcome."

Roberts and colleague Roy Foster addressed a room full of about 30 Syringa Hospital employees last Friday, April 29, as they discussed the next phase of the hospital's electronic health records (EHR) system, implemented in January of this year.

Hospital staff has been involved in coding and implementing records electronically, trying to meet various thresholds that will keep the hospital in line to receive federal stimulus money that is helping to pay for the EHR system.

"I am pretty excited about what this whole procedure does for us as a hospital and clinic as well as what it does for our patients," said Syringa Clinic medical director Dr. Cheryl Mallory.

Mallory explained the EHR can help provide a better quality of care for consumers in a variety of ways, including the data-driven reports it offers.

"An example would be that I have the ability to run a report on all my patients who have Type II diabetes and see what medicines they are on and what health and nutrition strategies are working best for them," Mallory said. "When the notes and medicines are all computerized, it's easier to cross check and make sure patients are getting the best, most efficient care."

Syringa employees have a variety of thresholds to meet during the next several years to get their EHR to total use.

"This is an ongoing, changing, living thing -- not just a project," Roberts told the group. "It's important to embrace meaningful use and make it a philosophy."

A hospital district vote in November 2009 was 1,041 yes to 150 no, which allowed the project to start in January and for the hospital to go into indebtedness of \$1.5 million to purchase the system.

Attesting the EHR's "Meaningful Use" stage will qualify Syringa for a \$1.4 million reimbursement.