Template email introducing OpenNotes to the practice

*Use the template email message below to introduce OpenNotes to your practice. Remember to replace the highlighted text with the correct date, your practice name, the name of your patient portal and appropriate contact information. You may want to provide additional information to your team when you introduce OpenNotes by attaching the “OpenNotes FAQs for practice staff” document that can be found in the module toolkit.*

**Subject: OpenNotes is coming to [practice name] [date]**

Dear Colleagues,

On [date], [practice name] will initiate OpenNotes, a platform for sharing ambulatory office visit notes online with patients. Patients will be able to read these notes on [patient portal name], our secure, confidential patient portal. Attached, please find a document that lists some frequently asked questions about OpenNotes and how it will be launched at our practice. Below is some important background information:

**Why is [practice name] leading by sharing notes?**

We are confident that sharing notes with patients is the right thing to do.

OpenNotes is now available in more than 50 health systems across the United States. Based on the experience of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, MA, with sharing patient notes, and surveys conducted at Kaiser Permanente and the Department of Veteran’s Affairs (VA), research has shown that patients overwhelmingly support OpenNotes and report important clinical benefits, including:

• better understanding of their health and medical conditions

• improved recall of their care plan

• feeling more in control of their care

• taking better care of themselves

• doing better at taking their medications as prescribed

Many patients reported they would choose a doctor or health care system based on the availability of OpenNotes.

Doctors have reported little, if any, additional burden for themselves or significant impact on workflow, and very few patient-reported concerns. Recent research published in *BMJ Quality & Safety* found that 99 percent of patients felt the same or better about their doctors after reading their notes, and more than 50 percent of doctors felt that patient satisfaction and trust improved with shared notes. For more study findings, including several publications, please go to opennotes.org. Based on the positive results at many other institutions, we believe that making OpenNotes a routine part of care at [practice name] is the right thing to do for our patients.

You may have questions about how OpenNotes will work at our practice that can be answered by the attached FAQ. If you have further questions or comments, please contact [contact name] at [email address] or [phone number].

We look forward to your participation,

[Sponsoring Clinician(s)]

Example provided courtesy of OpenNotes and adapted for STEPS Forward™.

Source: *AMA. Practice transformation series: OpenNotes. 2017.*