Interconnecting Clinicians Committee
Goals, Objectives and Issues

Goal

Create a supportive environment in Illinois for sharing electronic health information to ensure that every resident's complete and accurate medical history, including test results and medication information, is available to provide optimal care by the treating physician, improve the healthcare system and the health of the population.

Objectives

1. Eliminate barriers to sharing health information among persons authorized to receive the data within and outside of the State of Illinois.

   Issues

   a. *Are there any provisions in Illinois statutes that create a barrier to health information exchange with regard to the sharing of data or the creation of regional health information organizations (RHIOs) or sub network organizations (SNOs)?*

   b. *Are there any Illinois regulations that impede health information exchange?*

   c. *Are there any federal laws or regulations that impede health information exchange in Illinois?*

   d. *Are there any financial disincentives, such as taxes or fees, for entities seeking to perform health information exchange activities?*

   e. *What are the financial barriers to infrastructure development for health information exchange (different from the financial barriers to EHR adoption in clinician offices being addressed by the Informing Clinicians Committee). These barriers should be addressed in Objectives 6 and 7 in the context of recommendations fostering health information exchange.*

   [On issues of privacy policies and procedures, the EHR Taskforce should defer to the findings and recommendations of the Health Information Security Privacy Collaboration (HISPC).]

2. Review and make recommendations to revise Illinois laws where necessary to facilitate the exchange of electronic health records in an accurate and secure manner while protecting or maintaining patients' rights and privacy.

   Issues

   a. *Is there a need for additional data security or patient privacy legislation in Illinois? (defer to Health Information Security Privacy Collaboration (HISPC) effort)*

   b. *Should Illinois adopt a standard protocol of opt-in or opt-out? (Opt-out requires a documented communication that an individual's health records not be available for exchange)*

      i. *Should an individual have the opportunity to refuse exchange of personal information while included for de-identified population studies?*

   c. *Should patients' have involvement in/or accessibility to their records held by parties to an electronic exchange transaction?*

      i. *Opt- in vs. Opt-out enabling the specific transaction?*
      ii. *Should patients have access to who has received their records?*

3. Assure that standards in Illinois are consistent with the national standards of health information exchange.

   Issues

   a. *Is there a need for state legislation mandating that health exchange activities be performed in accordance with national standards?*

   b. *If so, how should compliance be assured?*

   c. *Should this be a regulatory requirement for licensed health care providers in terms of the exchange of health records?*

   d. *Should state agencies require that health data be submitted in accordance with the national standards? (e.g., hospital discharge data, immunizations, laboratories)*

   e. *Should this assurance function be performed by the entity subsequently envisioned in Objectives 4 and/or 7?*

4. Propose an entity to assure compliance with state and federal data protection requirements for those entities engaging in health information exchange.

   Issues

   a. *Will this entity be a state government agency, quasi-public agency or a public/private accreditation organization?*

   b. *What authority will the entity have to enforce compliance requirements?*

      i. *Fining authority vs. suspension of exchange rights*

   c. *Should the entity be affiliated with or separate from the implementation entity outlined in Objective 7?*

   d. *What would such an entity cost?*

   e. *How will this entity be funded?*

5. Develop a plan to provide technology support to clinicians and guidance on how to connect with other organizations within Illinois.

   Issues

   a. *Should this function be assigned to the entity referenced in Objective 7, an existing state agency or by a collaboration of health care providers/associations?*

   b. *Is there a way of leveraging health information vendors to provide this support on a low cost/no cost basis?*

   c. *Should this technological support be a requirement for doing business as a RHIO or SNO?*

6. Identify opportunities to foster electronic health exchange activities, especially in rural and underserved areas of the state.

   Issues

   a. *Should claims data be used as a starting point for health information exchange?*

   b. *Should an existing entity be tasked with searching for federal or foundation grants to support the creation of health information exchange*

activities in the state, or is this a function to be left to the entity proposed in Objective 7?

c. *Should there be a state program to provide grants for health information exchange activities?*

d. *How will state grant initiatives be funded?*

7. Propose an entity to assure implementation of health information exchange.

   Issues

   a. *Will this entity be a state government agency, quasi-public agency or a public/private accreditation organization?*

   b. *Should the entity be affiliated with or separate from the privacy and data protection assurance entity envisioned in Objective 4?*

   c. *If not a state agency, what would be the governance or policy-making body for the entity?*

   d. *Should the entity function as part of or coordinator for a state health information exchange network, i.e. serve as a resource locator service?*

   e. *Will this entity provide grants for local/regional health information exchange initiatives, and should these grants be general or targeted for rural and underserved areas?*

   f. *Is there a model from another state that may be adaptable for use in Illinois?*

   g. *Is there a model within Illinois that may be used at the state level?*

   h. *How will this entity be funded?*

   i. *What sort of architecture would be necessary to support the intended use of the data?*