

# Health IT and Its Role in Battling Zika

## WHAT IS ZIKA AND HOW IS IT SPREAD?

Zika is a virus spread primarily through an infected mosquito bite, but it can also be spread through sexual transmission. There is no vaccine or medicine currently available for Zika.

**The most up-to-date information about Zika can be found at [www.cdc.gov/Zika](http://www.cdc.gov/Zika).**

## COMMON SYMPTOMS



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), common symptoms include fever, rash, joint and muscle pain, red eyes and headache, and can last several days to a week.



For pregnant women, however, Zika can cause more damaging, long-term effects to the baby such as Microcephaly and congenital brain abnormalities.

## IMPORTANCE OF HEALTH IT IN COLLECTING ZIKA DATA

ONC and CMS are assisting state Medicaid agencies to use health information exchange and specialized registries to access and report Zika diagnoses and other conditions. Health information exchange can facilitate an effective strategy to help combat Zika, including:

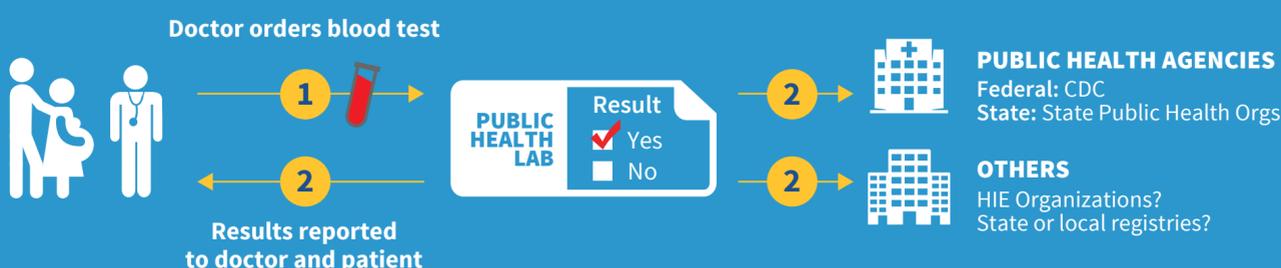
- Surveillance
- Case management
- Public health reporting
- Laboratory testing
- Clinical data collection
- Case investigation and management
- Reporting of outcomes

## CURRENT CHALLENGES FOR TRACKING ZIKA ELECTRONICALLY

There are currently no standard workflow protocols for reporting Zika cases electronically. From state to state, the processes are varied, and largely manual. The public health reporting system needs electronic workflows to transform how Zika data are gathered and disseminated.

### Health IT Enabled Future State of Reporting

Using electronic systems, reporting workflows are automated to speed reporting.



## FEDERAL ROLE

ONC and CMS partnered to expand Medicaid support for health information exchange in a letter to state Medicaid directors sent on February 29, 2016.

**This new support allows states to potentially build interoperable systems, and on-board providers to interoperable systems, such as a Zika registry.**



### DID YOU KNOW?

Existing federal funds for meaningful use can be used to help you set up a public health registry in your state.

## ZIKA REGISTRIES MEET CRITERIA FOR MEANINGFUL USE INCENTIVES

The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act supports registries that can help with Zika tracking.

### CRITERIA



## DEVELOPER CONSIDERATIONS FOR CREATING A ZIKA REGISTRY



In researching HIE products and technology solutions, ONC and CMS advise state Medicaid agencies to ask the important questions above.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

State Medicaid agencies should contact [MedicaidHITECH@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:MedicaidHITECH@cms.hhs.gov) and [Thomas.Novak@hhs.gov](mailto:Thomas.Novak@hhs.gov) to help coordinate or answer questions.

For U.S. Pregnancy Registry Information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/reporting/registry.html>