



# AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

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July 18, 2016

Karen DeSalvo, MD, MPH, M.Sc.  
Acting Assistant Secretary for Health,  
National Coordinator for Health Information Technology,  
United States Department of Health and Human Services  
Hubert H. Humphrey Building  
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RE: Interoperability Pledge

Dear National Coordinator DeSalvo:

On behalf of the over 80,000 members of the American College of Surgeons (ACS), we appreciate the opportunity to take the interoperability pledge. The ACS was founded in 1913 to improve the quality of care for the surgical patient by setting high standards for surgical education and practice. The ACS shares the principle that to achieve an open, connected care for our communities, we all have the responsibility to take action. To further these goals, we commit to the following principles to advance interoperability among health information systems enabling free movement of data, which are foundational to the success of delivery system reform.

**Consumer Access:** To help consumers easily and securely access their electronic health information, direct it to any desired location, learn how their information can be shared and used, and be assured that this information will be effectively and safely used to benefit their health and that of their community.

**No Blocking/Ensuring Transparency:** To help providers share individuals' health information for care with other providers and their patients whenever permitted by law, and not block electronic health information (defined as knowingly and unreasonably interfering with information sharing).

**Standards:** Implement federally recognized, national interoperability standards, policies, guidance, and practices for electronic health information, and adopt best practices including those related to privacy and security.

We appreciate the opportunity to pledge our support to these key principles and look forward to continuing our work to advance interoperability and to advocating for these principles in health information technology policies and programs.

Sincerely,

[signed]

David B. Hoyt, MD, FACS  
Executive Director

FOUNDED BY SURGEONS OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, 1913

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