

The Office of the National Coordinator for
Health Information Technology



ONC's Proposed Strategy on Governance for the Nationwide Health Information Network Following Public Comments on RFI

HIT Standards Committee Meeting
September 19, 2012

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What are ONC's Goals?

- Strengthen interoperability at the implementation level;
- Facilitate the emergence of a market for health information exchange services that syncs with payment reforms;
- Foster trust among providers about the exchange services they use;
- Foster trust among consumers about the exchange of their personal health information;
- Reduce risk, cost and complexity of exchange; and
- Promote effective relationships between intermediaries.

- Data have never moved well across organizational, vendor, and geographic boundaries; resolving this will be foundational to improve patient care as well as payment and delivery reform
 - Trust relationships between entities are difficult and costly, and take time to build and nurture;
 - Some business practices and revenue models have always tended to reinforce silos;
 - Existing models that support exchange are not sufficiently recognized and replicated; and
 - Implementation guides are not sufficiently specified.

- A voluntary governance framework, established through a new regulation, focused on entities that facilitate electronic health information exchange;
- The establishment of a set of conditions for trusted exchange (CTEs) – “rules of the road” – in the areas of safeguards (privacy and security), interoperability, and business practices;
- A validation process for entities to demonstrate conformance to the CTEs;
- Processes to update and retire CTEs;
- Establishment of a process to classify the readiness of technical standards and implementation specifications to support interoperability related CTEs; and .
- Approaches for monitoring and transparent oversight.

- Health information exchange is in its infancy and regulations could stifle an emerging market.
- ONC's goal should be to guide the market, while ensuring basic protections through existing regulatory frameworks – some already being implemented, others are pending implementation.

- A number of organizations and entities are already testing best practices for the exchange of information, and the concern is that additional regulations could slow expansion of these efforts.
- In an effort to achieve our goals – and to strengthen trust among various entities – we need a better understanding of how they are exchanging information, learn from their successes and failures, and encourage others to build on the good examples.
- This is new territory, and there is a lot going on that is working very well.

- We heard there are specific interoperability challenges that should be tackled through non-regulatory approaches or built upon existing approaches.

- Lead Through Action: Use available levers to directly accomplish specific goals
- Lead through Guidance : Disseminate a framework of principles and, where available, good practices, models, and tools for specific exchange challenges
- Engage, Listen, and Learn: Proactively encourage and engage with communities and stakeholders offering solutions for exchange.
- Monitor: Monitor marketplace for abuses, exchange successes, gaps and failures; and consumer and provider attitudes

Discussion