

CURES ACT FINAL RULE

ONC Approach and Stakeholder Opportunities for Advancing Health IT across the Care Continuum

This “tipsheet” includes an overview of the Office of the National Coordinator’s (ONC) approach to supporting the advancement of health information technology (IT) across the care continuum as well as activities and lessons learned that stakeholders may consider when seeking to explore health IT for specialty care and practice settings.

Overview

Through collaborative efforts with technical and clinical stakeholders, ONC developed an approach to support health IT advancement for specialty care and practice settings. This collaborative approach consists of three parts and includes analysis of the following: stakeholders’ identified clinical priorities supported by current certification criteria; existing or emerging standards; and the potential development of informational resources to help guide effective implementation of clinical health IT priorities in practice.

Lessons Learned: Additional Factors for Consideration

Deploying certified health IT systems is just one part of an overall approach for advancing health IT priorities across the care continuum. Stakeholders, including users and specialty groups, should continue to work with developers to innovate, develop, and deploy health IT that exceeds ONC requirements to enable safer, more effective, efficient health care delivery while reducing burdens.

Stakeholders may experience many challenging factors with implementing their identified clinical priorities in practice including challenges related to readiness, feasibility, and standards maturity. Stakeholders have noted a need to acknowledge these challenges, adjust implementation planning to mitigate the risk, and to develop scalable approaches for long-term solutions.

THE ONC APPROACH CONSISTS OF THREE PARTS:



Part 1: ONC analyzes adopted and proposed certification criteria in the ONC Health IT Certification Program to ensure broad applicability to multiple medical specialties and sites of service.



Part 2: ONC focuses on the real-time evaluation of standards to determine applicability to medical specialties and sites of service as well as to the broader care continuum, including the evaluation of such standards for inclusion in the ONC Interoperability Standards Advisory (ISA).



Part 3: ONC works in collaboration with stakeholders to support the development of resources for medical specialties and sites of service for which there is an identified need to advance the effective implementation of certified health IT.



PART 1: POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDER ACTIVITIES

- Establish/ identify clinical and/or interoperability priorities using a robust, transparent methodology. Involve review from experts in the field and engage developers up front. Build upon lessons learned from earlier prioritization efforts.
- Explore priorities according to their scope, applicability, and potential overlap with other health care communities/settings.
- Identify extent to which the ONC Health IT Certification Program currently supports identified priorities as well as current gaps and overall usability challenges.
- Identify a clear process as part of the prioritization approach that reflects awareness of existing capabilities in certification, current gaps, overall technology capability, and practical usability.
- Invite ONC subject matter input.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDER PRODUCT(S):

1. Clinical priority list developed using a transparent methodology;
2. Crosswalk analysis of priorities to existing certification criteria and clearly defined functionality intent.



PART 2: POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDER ACTIVITIES

- Explore functional priorities and standards not currently supported by the ONC Health IT Certification Program that could be supported by other means, including relevant gaps, barriers, and feasibility of priority functionalities and standards in practice.
- Identify existing and emerging standards in support of stakeholder priorities included in the ISA.
- Invite ONC subject matter input.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDER PRODUCT(S):

1. Technical analysis with crosswalk of priorities to existing/emerging standards including those in the ONC Interoperability Standards Advisory;
2. Description of readiness/ feasibility of priorities given crosswalk and gap analysis.



PART 3: POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDER ACTIVITIES

- Identify best practices, activities, resources, and tools to inform and support the prioritized list in practice. This may also include lessons learned and experiences from pilot implementation sites.
- Develop an implementation focused document, or Informational Resource, to guide providers and developers on the effective and safe implementation of clinical priorities in practice using health IT.
- Describe the proposed functionality and intent, as well as the availability of standard(s) for each priority, a technical analysis that compares priorities to existing certification criteria, and key discussion questions for further stakeholder input as part of the Implementation Resource development process.
- Solicit input on future state and gaps in addition to current priorities.
- Invite ONC subject matter input.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDER PRODUCT(S):

1. Create an Informational Resource (IR) document that includes products of Part 1 and Part 2 in addition to the items outlined above for Part 3;
2. Finalize the Informational Resource to incorporate further stakeholder input.