

**REPORT:
HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
ADVISORY COMMISSION**



Required by Item 288P

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PREFACE

Executive Order 95 of the Kaine administration created the Governor's Health Information Technology Advisory Council to provide relevant stakeholder input to the Secretary of Health and Human Resources and the Secretary of Technology concerning the use of federal monies appropriated through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to continuously improve the quality and cost effectiveness of health care in the Commonwealth through the adoption of technology.

The federal Office of National Coordinator (ONC) within Health and Human Services provided a funding opportunity to Virginia for the establishment of a statewide Health information Exchange (HIE). The ONC funding allocation is \$11.6 million over a period of four years. This project will be managed by the Virginia Department of Health.

The following report contains an Executive Summary and Strategic Plan for the implementation of a statewide HIE in the Commonwealth. This plan was approved for implementation by ONC in March 2011. Subsequently, the Virginia Department of Health issued a Request for Proposals for a vendor to implement the statewide HIE in August 2011. It is anticipated that a vendor will be announced in October 2011.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Virginia's Statewide Health Information Exchange (SHIE) is a collaborative endeavor, involving public and private stakeholders from across the Commonwealth. SHIE's Vision:

That consumers and providers of health services are empowered to make good decisions based on secure, timely, accurate, comprehensive and easily-accessible information, available to authorized users for coordination of care, improvements in safety and quality, and advancements in the provision of healthcare.

SHIE's Mission:

To foster and sustain trust, collaboration and information-sharing among consumers, providers and purchasers of healthcare services in the Commonwealth of Virginia, leading to measurable improvement in outcomes and cost-effective delivery of services.

Strategic Plan

The Commonwealth of Virginia's overall strategy for developing and increasing adoption of health information exchange within and outside its borders relies on several principles:

1. Building upon existing private sector and public sector efforts with a minimal amount of duplicative effort both from a manpower and technology perspective.
2. Coordinating project timelines for health information technology related projects across all Commonwealth state agencies and pooling resources and implementation approaches whenever applicable.
3. Utilizing a combination of approaches (grassroots and top-down) across the stakeholder landscape to solicit input and outcomes information for continuous improvement of health information exchange policies and procedures over the course of the implementation.

HITAC has made the following recommendation as to the overall strategic implementation approach for the SHIE:

Allow any HIE that meets the HIE certification requirements to compete in a free market across the Commonwealth, supplying their exchange services to any interested healthcare provider.

- This model includes an approach of "HIE certification" based on a set of HIE requirements.
- An HIE must first go through a certification process where their compliance with the SHIE standards are tested and verified, and then upon successful certification they will be authorized to operate as a SHIE certified HIE on the SHIE.
- These SHIE certified HIEs do not need to be HIEs in the traditional sense (such as CareSpark, MedVirginia and NOVARCHIO), but could also be other entities, such as Integrated Delivery Networks (IDNs).
- Commonwealth state agencies that handle health-related data or healthcare delivery are also expected to participate.
- Any healthcare data provider that wishes to interoperate directly at the state level could be SHIE certified and authorized to be an HIE on the SHIE.

Governance

Governance for the SHIE must reflect the interests of the varied stakeholders that will participate, due to the following facts:

1. Virginia providers will receive ARRA incentive funding for becoming meaningful users of certified EHRs.
2. The SHIE will provide a subset of services that providers need to become meaningful users.
3. The SHIE will assist in improving the quality and efficiency of healthcare delivered to Virginians.
4. There will be multiple stakeholders that benefit from the services provided by the SHIE, including consumers and patients.

Finance

As part of the dialogue to develop a financial sustainability plan linked to stakeholder endorsement, the following Finance Principles were established for the SHIE:

1. The SHIE should benefit all consumer groups, cost should not prohibit participation, and ultimate output will benefit the consumer.
2. The SHIE finance model will present fairness to all stakeholders.
3. The SHIE finance model will be a public/private partnership.
4. The SHIE finance model will be value based.
5. The SHIE finance model will be kept as simple as possible.
6. The SHIE finance model will be revisited periodically based on policies and procedures to be developed by the state HIE governance body to ensure appropriate levels of sustainability.

In order to properly implement these principles, Virginia will procure an experienced non-profit HIE/HIO sector partner to implement and operate the SHIE Governance Body.

Technical Infrastructure

The following are the services envisioned for the SHIE and its participating SHIE certified HIEs. Please note that many of the services are considered optional and are also subject to final policy and procedure approval for implementation by the SHIE Governance Body.

1. Integration Services: Services supporting the technical integration with the SHIE.
2. Core Services: Services critical to operating the SHIE.
3. Functional Services: Basic and advanced services, some of which are mandated by ONC.
4. Reporting Services: Services meeting the reporting needs of the SHIE.
5. Decision Support Services: Services meeting the advanced analytical needs of the SHIE.
6. Infrastructure / Utility: Services provided through the technical architecture of the SHIE.

Business and Technical Operations

The SHIE organization consists of two major functional groupings for operations.

- The first includes governance, oversight, management, outreach, and control that consist of the Governance Body as well as the executive director and management functions of the SHIE.
- The second grouping consists of the SHIE Core Services Contracted Operations which contains the functions to be provided by an HIE/HIO Core Services Operations contractor. The SHIE, SHIE certified HIEs, Regional Extension Center and Virginia Medicaid coordinate provider outreach and communication activities as well as the overall provider adoption strategy and goals.

Legal and Policy

In order to guide the development of privacy and security policies, the Legal and Policy Committee of HITAC recommended that HITAC adopt an existing privacy and security framework suited for the proposed SHIE initiative. The Committee recommended the adoption of the *Connecting for Health* frameworks, whose development was funded by the Markle Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

After a complete assessment of possible participation models, HITAC selected the voluntary participation (“opt-in”) model. Consumer participation based on opt-in, appropriately authorized, is consistent with federal and state legal requirements.

Each HIE must have trust agreements with end users which address compliance with applicable law, cooperation with other HIEs, requirements to access and use the health information network only for permitted purposes, limitation on the future use of data received through the HIE, security of data at rest and in transit, and measures regarding identity management and access credentials.

Communications

The key audiences that will be targeted include:

1. Existing HIE/HIT Resources
2. Patients/Consumers/Clients
3. Providers
4. Purchasers (health plans, managed care organizations)
5. Government leaders (legislative, agency staff)
6. Potential vendors of services
7. Media Representatives
8. HITAC and committee members

Evaluation Methods

Given the strategic approach of the COV-HIE contracting for both its Governance Body as well as its functional vendors, many of the evaluation criteria and metrics will be defined and collected by these contracted entities with guidance from VDH and the selected Governance Body and the evaluation committee. However, the current stage of HIE development places the COV-HIE at a critical juncture where the overall requirements for evaluation and metrics must be clearly defined for the contracted entities in order to process.

STRATEGIC PLAN

A complete copy of the Virginia's Strategic plan for the implementation of a statewide HIE can be found at www.hits.virginia.gov, Virginia's Health Information Technology Spotlight.

CONCLUSION

The infusion of federal ARRA funds to the States and Territories is driving an accelerated process of Health IT adoption. The role of Virginia government and the Office of Health IT is to leverage various projects to optimize the ability to improve the cost of quality of care for the citizens of the Commonwealth. With strong and vigilant stakeholder input, the Commonwealth stands as a national leader in Health IT and is poised to provide leadership to realize a comprehensive National Health Information Network.