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December 15, 2025

#### **MEMORANDUM**

TO: The Honorable Glenn Youngkin

Governor of Virginia

The Honorable L. Louis Lucas

President Pro Tempore, Senate of Virginia

The Honorable Don Scott

Speaker of the House, House of Delegates

FROM: Karen Shelton, MD

State Health Commissioner, Virginia Department of Health

SUBJECT: 2025 Health Information Needs Workgroup Report

This report is submitted in compliance with the Virginia Acts of the Assembly – § 32.1-276.9:1 (B) of the Code of Virginia, which states:

B. The Commissioner shall report on activities, findings, and recommendations of the work group annually to the Governor and the General Assembly no later than December 1 of each year, beginning in 2014

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at (804) 864-7002.

KS/KB Enclosure

Pc: The Honorable Janet Kelly, Secretary of Health and Human Resources



# 2025 HEALTH INFORMATION NEEDS WORKGROUP

# REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2025



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

#### **PREFACE**

In accordance with § 32.1-276.9:1 of the Code of Virginia, the State Health Commissioner is instructed to report on the activities, findings, and recommendations of the Health Information Needs Workgroup on an annual basis. The report is prepared by the nonprofit organization with which the State Health Commissioner contracts to (i) compile, store, analyze, and evaluate health data submitted by Virginia health care providers; (ii) operates the All-Payer Claims Database; and (iii) measures the efficiency and productivity of health care providers that operate in the Commonwealth. The State Health Commissioner is responsible for submitting the report to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 1<sup>st</sup> each year.

#### REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

Department of Health
Department of Medical Assistance Services
Department of Health Professions
State Corporation Commission's Bureau of Insurance
Virginia Health Reform Initiative
Virginia Health Information
Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association
Virginia Association of Health Plans
Medical Society of Virginia

#### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	i
Report Contributors	i
Table of Contents	ii
Executive Summary	iii
Recommendations and Action Items	iii
Introduction	1
Workgroup Mandate	1
Workgroup Activities	1
Report Outline	1
Background and Purpose of Workgroup	2
Inventory Of Current Health Information Programs And Reform Efforts	3
Smartchart Network program (SNP)	3
All-Payer Claims Database (ACPD)	3
Advance Health Care Planning Registry (AHCPR)	4
Public Health Reporting Pathway (PHRP)	4
Patient level data system (PLDS)	
Virginia Health benefits exchange	
Prescription monitoring program (PMP)	5
Efficiency and Productivity Information Collection System and Annual Licensure Survey	
(EPICS)	
Virginia Healthcare Workforce Data Center (HWDC)	
Action Items and Next Steps	
Closing Remarks	
Appendix A - Chapters 693 and 709 of the [2012] Acts Of Assembly	
Appendix B – Acronyms and Abbreviations	

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with § 32.1-276.9:1 of the Code of Virginia, the State Health Commissioner is instructed to report on the activities, findings, and recommendations of the Health Information Needs Workgroup on an annual basis. The report is prepared by the nonprofit organization with which the State Health Commissioner contracts to (i) compile, store, analyze, and evaluate health data submitted by Virginia health care providers; (ii) operates the All-Payer Claims Database; and (iii) measures the efficiency and productivity of health care providers that operate in the Commonwealth. The State Health Commissioner is responsible for submitting the report to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 1<sup>st</sup> each year.

Virginia Health Information (VHI) deferred convening meetings of the full Health Information Needs Workgroup in 2025 as major topics for the year were covered by the VHI Board of Directors. The nonprofit continued collaborating with relevant stakeholders throughout calendar year 2025 to maintain current requirements as well as discuss potential expansion(s). The findings and recommendations resulting from the stakeholder partnership exchanges are listed below.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

- 1. Pursue expansion of Virginia Outpatient Level Data Collection VHI continued to work with VDH to submit a decision memo to the Board of Health, which expanded the outpatient data requirement. This change was approved by the State Health Commissioner on behalf of the Board of Health on April 29, 2025. The new data collection scope aligns Virginia's outpatient data collection with national practices and strengthens the Commonwealth's ability to evaluate trends in outpatient surgical and emergency care, support Certificate of Public Need (COPN) and evaluate charity care.
- 2. Expand the functionality of the Public Health Reporting Pathway (PHRP) Now that VHI has transitioned its technology vendor for the PHRP, with additional funding, a stronger repository of public health messaging data can be constructed to better meet the needs of the VDH and the broader healthcare community.
- 3. Begin planning to implement the expanded data collection related to the 2023 legislative changes to the Smartchart Network Program This includes the collection of lab results, images, and discharge and other treatment and care coordination information. Updated legal agreements and an implementation plan are being developed for this collection.
- 4. Assess data needs that are currently not addressed through current inventory of Virginia programs VHI will assess which program enhancements and additions are necessary to meet Virginia healthcare stakeholders' needs over the next year.

#### INTRODUCTION

#### WORKGROUP MANDATE

The Health Information Needs Workgroup and annual reporting requirement to the Governor and General Assembly are required by Chapters 693 and 709 of the 2012 Acts of Assembly (See Appendix A). The State Health Commissioner is responsible for reporting on the workgroup's activities, findings, and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 1<sup>st</sup> each year.

#### **WORKGROUP ACTIVITIES**

VHI deferred meetings of the full Health Information Needs Workgroup in 2025 as major topics for the year were covered by the VHI Board of Directors. VHI continued collaborating with relevant stakeholders throughout calendar year 2025 to maintain current requirements as well as discuss potential expansion(s). Most Health Information Needs Workgroup members are represented on the VHI Board of Directors, which meets five times annually and are regularly updated on the seven programs that VHI administers.

#### REPORT OUTLINE

The remainder of this report provides a brief background and purpose of the workgroup. The report also provides an updated inventory of current health information programs and reform efforts, describes how the programs are complying with legislative requirements, and discusses program accomplishments. Programs include the Smartchart Network Program, All-Payer Claims Database, Advance Health Care Planning Registry, Public Health Reporting Pathway, Patient Level Data System, Virginia Health Benefits Exchange, Prescription Monitoring Program, Efficiency and Productivity Information Collection System, Annual Licensure Survey Data and the Virginia Healthcare Workforce Data Center.

#### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF WORKGROUP

At the direction of the State Health Commissioner, VHI established a multi-stakeholder workgroup to study and make recommendations for the ongoing needs for Virginia healthcare information to support healthcare reform. Specific mention is made to the development and operation of the All-Payer Claims Database (APCD), the Virginia Health Information Exchange and any other health reform initiatives. As required, VHI established the workgroup as outlined in the law and began efforts to meet the specific requirements of § 32.1-276.9:1 as outlined below:

- A. The Commissioner shall direct the nonprofit organization to establish a workgroup to study continuing health information needs and to develop recommendations for design, development, and operation of systems and strategies to meet those needs. The work group shall include representatives of the Department of Health, the Department of Medical Assistance Services, the Department of Health Professions, the State Corporation Commission's Bureau of Insurance, the Virginia Health Reform Initiative, the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association, the Virginia Association of Health Plans, the Medical Society of Virginia, healthcare providers and other stakeholders and shall:
  - 1. Identify various health information needs related to implementation of healthcare reform initiatives, including those associated with development and operation of an all-payer claims database, the Virginia Health Information Exchange, the Virginia Health Benefit Exchange and any other health reform initiatives. In doing so, the work group shall identify the clinical and paid claims information required and the purposes for which such information will be used; and
  - 2. Identify opportunities for maximizing efficiency and effectiveness of health information systems, reducing duplication of effort related to collection of health information and minimizing costs and risks associated with collection and use of health information.
- B. The Commissioner shall report on activities, findings and recommendations of the work group annually to the Governor and the General Assembly no later than December 1 of each year, beginning in 2014.

The mission further encompasses the tasks required from the workgroup in a straightforward manner as a tool to ensure the requirements of § 32.1-276.9:1 are met. During 2020, the Health Information Needs Workgroup (HINW) was re-established after a new call for nominations from all stakeholder groups identified in § 32.1-276.9:1.

#### INVENTORY OF CURRENT HEALTH INFORMATION PROGRAMS AND REFORM EFFORTS

Consistent with its statutory mandate, the following is an inventory of health information programs and reform efforts:

#### SMARTCHART NETWORK PROGRAM (SNP)

- 1. The 2023 General Assembly changed the Emergency Department Care Coordination (EDCC) Program to the Smartchart Network Program (SNP) effective January 2024 § 32.1-372 which provides a single, statewide technology solution that connects all healthcare providers, insurance carriers and other organizations with a treatment, payment or operations relationship with a patient in the Commonwealth to facilitate real-time communication and collaboration and improve the quality of patient care services. All functions of the existing SNP remain intact and unchanged.
- 2. The SNP continues to encourage care guidelines to be shared inside of the tool. The number of total actions has increased over time as providers add content. A large portion of total actions include the creation of content in the SNP meaning Virginia healthcare providers are writing and uploading content such as care guidelines, care histories and security and safety events. Care guidelines, or care insights, are designed to aid emergency department physicians caring for a patient in an acute setting. Adding guidelines to a patient's record view in the SNP will ensure that a notification, or Emergency Department Optimization (EDO) alert, is automatically sent to any emergency department in Virginia or on the Collective Network at which the patient presents and can greatly reduce overutilization of the emergency department.
- 3. Continued enhancements and expansions to the SNP are focused on regular analysis of the quality, engagement and use of the Program, inclusion of new data sources such as new laboratory results, expanded integration of Virginia's Prescription Monitoring Program to join the substance use (opioid) health crisis response and ongoing recruitment of downstream healthcare providers. The continued support of the General Assembly, state agencies, healthcare providers, health insurance plans and non-profit organizations help the program advance these goals.

#### ALL-PAYER CLAIMS DATABASE (ACPD)

1. The Virginia APCD is a collection of paid medical and pharmacy claims from all health plans that cover a minimum of 1,000 Virginia resident lives. Each claim contains information about the care provided, the level of reimbursement, servicing/billing provider details, patient demographics and other factors that are linked together longitudinally over time. Originally created as a voluntary program in 2012, submission to the APCD was later mandated in 2019. VDH, DMAS and the SCC BOI are all given access to the database by law. Researchers, providers and other organizations can request and license data and reports from the APCD as approved by an Advisory Release Committee. The APCD serves as the primary data source for a variety of programs/publications, including the Healthcare Pricing Transparency report, the

- Commercially Reasonable Payments Data Set and comparative dashboards for Smarter Care Virginia.
- 2. During 2025, Virginia's APCD supported data projects and research with Boston University School of Medicine, University of Nevada, University of Virginia, VCU Medical Center, Inova Health System, the Virginia Center for Health Innovation and others.

#### ADVANCE HEALTH CARE PLANNING REGISTRY (AHCPR)

- 1. This secure registry allows Virginia residents to store their advance healthcare directive, durable do not resuscitate, healthcare power of attorney, financial power of attorney and other advance health care planning documents at no cost so that medical providers, emergency responders, family members and anyone else to whom they grant access will honor their wishes. The Advance Health Care Planning Registry (AHCPR) is a long-standing program of VHI, with a technology platform provided by US Advance Care Plan Registry. Documents and information stored within the Virginia ACPR are available to providers within all Virginia emergency departments via the SNP. VHI collaborates with health systems, the Virginia POLST Collaborative and Honoring Choices Virginia to expand knowledge and use of the registry. In addition, VHI employees have been trained and certified as Advanced Care Planning Facilitators.
- 2. During the 2024 General Assembly Session, the program was legislatively expanded from an Advance Care Directives Registry into a broader <u>Advance Health Care Planning Registry</u>. This state legal change expands the document types that can be stored including portable medical orders. In the future, licensed health care providers will also be able to access documents on behalf of patients with whom they have a treatment relationship.

#### PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTING PATHWAY (PHRP)

- 1. The PHRP provides the electronic transport of public health reportable data to and/or from the VDH. This service automates the process for submitting immunizations, reportable electronic lab reporting (ELR), syndromic surveillance data and cancer case reporting. PHRP also allows public health reportable data to be sent from a certified electronic health record (EHR) through VHI, enabling providers and hospitals to improve workflows and data accuracy while also meeting the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Promoting Interoperability Program measure managed by VDH.
- 2. VHI worked with VDH during 2023 to successfully transition the PHRP to a new technology vendor which now provides 24/7 technical support, HITRUST security certification and greater options for enhanced features in the future. VHI continues to work collaboratively with VDH to identify and assess ongoing potential enhancements and expansions to the PHRP.

#### PATIENT LEVEL DATA SYSTEM (PLDS)

- 1. The (PLDS is the cornerstone of <u>Chapter 7.2 Healthcare Data Reporting</u> and is a database of hospital acute discharges for all Virginia licensed hospitals. Information in the PLDS includes diagnoses, surgical procedures, charges, the number of days in the hospital and other information routinely collected as part of hospital bills. Similar information is also collected on several commonly performed outpatient surgical procedures.
- 2. VDH has worked with stakeholders to develop a voluntary program to enable enhanced outpatient data collection that is aligned with national practices. This program, which takes effect on February 1, 2026, will strengthen the Commonwealth's ability to evaluate trends in outpatient surgical and emergency care, support Certificate of Public Need (COPN), and evaluate charity care. A Notice of Intended Regulatory Action was published in the Virginia Register of Regulations to amend the Regulations Governing Outpatient Data Reporting (12VAC5-218). VDH is preparing proposed amendments to 12 VAC5-218 to present to the Board in 2026. The proposed amendments will convert the provisions of the voluntary outpatient data collection program into regulatory requirements. © 026.

#### VIRGINIA HEALTH BENEFITS EXCHANGE

The Virginia Health Benefits Exchange was created by the 2020 Virginia General Assembly to be operated as a new division within the SCC. Beginning November 1, 2023, for the 2024 plan year, <u>Virginia's Insurance Marketplace</u> replaced <u>www.healthcare.gov</u> in Virginia to connect eligible Virginians with affordable health insurance options who are not insured by their employer, do not have affordable coverage, Medicaid or Medicare. Virginia's Insurance Marketplace is where consumers can shop for, compare and purchase quality and affordable health and dental insurance plans. Additional information can be found at <a href="https://scc.virginia.gov/pages/Health-Benefit-Exchange-(6)">https://scc.virginia.gov/pages/Health-Benefit-Exchange-(6)</a>.

#### PRESCRIPTION MONITORING PROGRAM (PMP)

- 1. Virginia's Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) is a 24/7 database containing information on dispensed controlled substances included in Schedule II, III, IV, and those in Schedule V for which a prescription is required, naloxone and all drugs of concern, and cannabidiol oil or THC-A oil dispensed by a pharmaceutical processor in Virginia. The primary purpose of the PMP is to promote safe prescribing and dispensing practices for covered substances by providing timely and essential information to healthcare providers. Law enforcement and health profession licensing boards use the PMP to support investigations related to doctor shopping, controlled substance diversion and inappropriate prescribing and dispensing.
- 2. The PMP promotes the appropriate use of controlled substances for legitimate medical purposes and helps to monitor compliance with a treatment plan. The PMP deters the misuse, abuse, and diversion of controlled substances and helps law enforcement identify multiple prescriber use, drug diversion, and illegal prescribing and dispensing. Analysis

- of PMP data helps to identify trends with specific drugs, geographic regions, and patient and health care provider demographics. Such analyses are also useful to health profession licensing boards when conducting investigations into the misuse, diversion, or the illegal prescribing and dispensing of prescription medication in the Commonwealth.
- 3. The PMP is used by every licensed prescriber in Virginia, all of whom have access by virtue of the license. Delegates of prescribers and pharmacists, investigators for licensing boards, authorized law enforcement agents, approved parole and probation officers, and the VDH Office of the Chief Medical Examiner also have access to the PMP. Veterinarians who dispense opioids or other covered substances >7 days may also access the PMP. Pet owners who are dispensed a covered substance have a record of such dispensing in the PMP.

## EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY INFORMATION COLLECTION SYSTEM AND ANNUAL LICENSURE SURVEY DATA (EPICS)

- 1. The Efficiency and Productivity Information Collection System (EPICS) encompasses financial and operational information collected on all licensed ambulatory surgical centers, hospitals and nursing facilities in Virginia. Annual Licensure Survey Data (ALSD) includes utilization and ancillary data collected from Virginia hospitals, nursing facilities, ambulatory surgical centers, freestanding physician offices and emergency departments subject to Certificate of Public Need (COPN) reviewable services. The two collections encompass ten topic areas with over 600 data elements. Data from both programs are used for COPN applications to ensure that services provided are needed within the community. Increased transparency incentivizes providers to deliver care as efficiently as possible.
- 2. Since 1996, VHI has been collecting financial information on Virginia hospitals. As hospitals have evolved into larger systems, the need for more comprehensive reporting on parent/subsidiary operations and financial status has been recognized as a priority. A 2016 workgroup to address parent/subsidiary data as well as to review all collected data elements culminated in an expansion of the information collected to reflect financial information on health system components other than hospitals, such as physician provider groups and other growing components of health systems. The first series of parent/subsidiary reporting began with data reflective of the fiscal year ending in 2017. VHI released its first public report of fiscal year aggregate revenue, expense and balance sheet information in November 2021. VHI first released a spreadsheet available for purchase containing FYE2020 data to enable users to drill down for additional details and releases an update each year. During 2025, VHI developed and released an interactive Healthcare Financial Performance Dashboard available at <a href="https://vhi.org/financial/default.asp">https://vhi.org/financial/default.asp</a>.

3. Parent and Subsidiary General and Financial Data are available at <a href="https://vhi.org/Parent/default.asp">https://vhi.org/Parent/default.asp</a>.

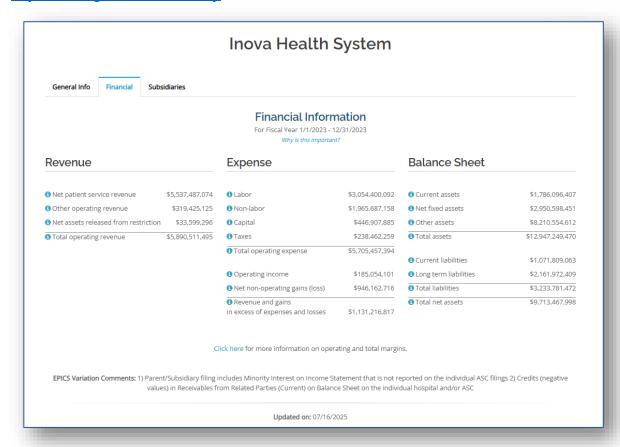


Fig. 1, an example of parent financial data available in the EPICS. Parent financial data was collected between January 1, 2023, and December 31, 2023.

#### VIRGINIA HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE DATA CENTER (HWDC)

1. Section § 54.1-2506.1 of the Code of Virginia in 2009 provides for the Virginia Department of Health Professions' (DHP) collection and maintenance of the Healthcare Workforce Data Center (HWDC)'s data for workforce and health planning purposes. The HWDC works to improve the data collection and measurement of Virginia's healthcare workforce through regular assessment of workforce supply and demand issues among the 80 professions and 350,000 practitioners licensed in Virginia by DHP. The HWDC is provided online to ensure accessibility of the findings among healthcare decision makers, hospital systems, academic institutions and constituents statewide.

2. The table below and other data may be accessed at:
<a href="https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/PublicResources/HealthcareWorkforceDataCenter/Dashbo">https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/PublicResources/HealthcareWorkforceDataCenter/Dashbo</a>
<a href="https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/PublicResources/HealthcareWorkforceDataCenter/Dashbo">https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/PublicResources/HealthcareWorkforceDataCenter/Dashbo</a>
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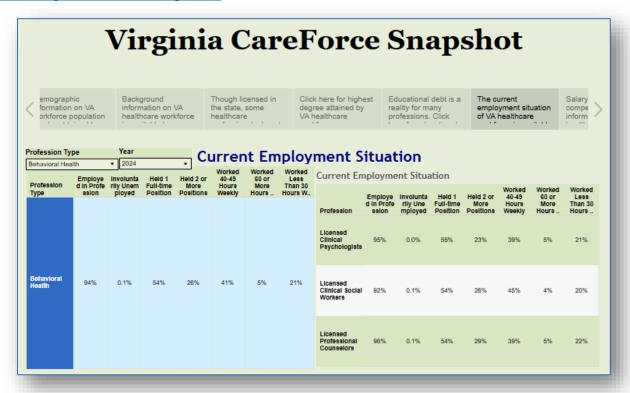


Fig. 2, example of data available through the Virginia Healthcare Workforce Data Center.

3. The data center includes the Virginia Practitioner Profile, which houses data on Virginia physicians' demographic, education, specialty, awards, payment types received, disciplinary actions taken by the board of medicine, felonies, etc. accessible at <a href="https://www.vahealthprovider.com">https://www.vahealthprovider.com</a>.

#### ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT STEPS

- 1. Providers and stakeholders to begin collection of the expanded emergency department and outpatient surgical data as well as continue to work with the VDH to update and modify Virginia regulation <a href="https://linear.ncbi.nlm.ncbi.n
- 2. Expand the functionality of the PHRP: Now that VHI has transitioned its technology vendor for the PHRP, with additional funding, a stronger repository of public health messaging data can be constructed to better meet the needs of the VDH and the broad healthcare community.

- 3. Utilize the feedback from participants to develop an implementation plan to collect the expanded data related to the 2023 GA changes to the Smartchart Network Program including the collection of lab results, images, and discharge and other treatment and care coordination information.
- 4. Assess data needs that are currently not addressed through current inventory of Virginia programs: VHI will assess which program enhancements and additions are necessary to meet Virginia healthcare stakeholders' needs over the next year.

#### **CLOSING REMARKS**

§ 32.1-276.9:1 was developed to ensure that as changes in the healthcare system are planned and implemented, the Commonwealth of Virginia is positioned to understand how changes will affect its residents and help ensure that the goals of better health, better care, and lower cost are met. Toward that end, the workgroup's mission is focused on identifying health information needs related to implementation of healthcare reform and developing recommendations to ensure existing health information programs support the goals and identify redundancies or outdated systems that can be eliminated, streamlined or modified. VHI looks forward to this ongoing effort and the opportunity to be of assistance in identifying and collaborating with stakeholders to support the health information needs of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### APPENDIX A - § 32.1-276.9:1 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA: HEALTH INFORMATION NEEDS RELATED TO REFORM; WORK GROUP

The requirements related to the establishment of the Health Information Needs Workgroup and the State Health Commissioner's annual report to the Governor and General Assembly were enacted under Chapters 693 and 709 of the 2012 Acts of Assembly. Current statutory language is provided below:

§ 32.1-276.9:1 of the Code of Virginia: Health information needs related to reform; work group

A. The Commissioner shall direct the nonprofit organization to establish a workgroup to study continuing health information needs and to develop recommendations for design, development, and operation of systems and strategies to meet those needs. The work group shall include representatives of the Department of Health, the Department of Medical Assistance Services, the Department of Health Professions, the State Corporation Commission's Bureau of Insurance, the Virginia Health Reform Initiative, the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association, the Virginia Association of Health Plans, the Medical Society of Virginia, healthcare providers and other stakeholders and shall:

- 1. Identify various health information needs related to implementation of healthcare reform initiatives, including those associated with development and operation of an all-payer claims database, the Virginia Health Information Exchange, the Virginia Health Benefit Exchange and any other health reform initiatives. In doing so, the work group shall identify the clinical and paid claims information required and the purposes for which such information will be used; and
- 2. Identify opportunities for maximizing efficiency and effectiveness of health information systems, reducing duplication of effort related to collection of health information and minimizing costs and risks associated with collection and use of health information.
- B. The Commissioner shall report on activities, findings and recommendations of the work group annually to the Governor and the General Assembly no later than December 1 of each year, beginning in 2014.

#### APPENDIX B - ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

This is a listing of the acronyms and abbreviations appearing throughout the report and its appendices.

AHCPR – Advance Health Care Planning Registry

ALSD - Annual Licensure Survey Data

APCD – All-Payer Claims Database

BOI – Bureau of Insurance

CMS – Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

COPN – Certificate of Public Need

DHBDS – Department of Behavioral and Developmental Services

EDCC – Emergency Department Care Coordination

EDO – Emergency Department Optimization

HER – Electronic Health Record

ELR – Electric Laboratory Reporting

EPICS – Efficiency and Productivity Information Collection System

DHP – Department of Health Professions

HIE – Health Information Exchange

HWCD – [Virginia] Health Care Workforce Data Center

PLD – Patient Level Data System

PHRP – Public Health Reporting Pathway

PMP – Prescription Monitoring Program

POLST - Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment

SCC – State Corporation Commission

SNP – Smartchart Network Program

VDH – Virginia Department of Health

Health Information Needs, 2025

VHBE - Virginia Health Benefits Exchange

VHI – Virginia Health Information

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