

MOVING AHEAD WITH HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE

The health industry in the Evergreen State has been working for years to improve patient outcomes and reduce costs. One of the main barriers to progress has been the inability to easily share health information between and among health organizations. Because patient information is fragmented across hundreds of enterprises, it is difficult for any one enterprise to significantly improve their performance without engaging their trading partners.

Technology and business solutions need to be created that allow organizations to appropriately share data externally, while also enhancing use of information internally. Clearly, there is a need for comprehensive Health Information Exchange (HIE).

Aligning Players in Washington State

While some communities and organizations in Washington state have organized effective HIE solutions on a local or organization-wide basis, a statewide cross-enterprise solution that makes long-term business sense has not been achieved.

Now, with engagement and support from the public sector, a concerted private sector-led effort is taking shape to advance Health Information Exchange in Washington state.

Federal & State Support – Private Sector Engagement

During 2009, the U.S. Congress and the Washington State Legislature enacted laws in support of robust Health Information Exchange.

In Olympia, a new law was enacted to accelerate the secure exchange of “high value” health data – including lab results, medications, immunizations, diagnostic images, and others. The law directs the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) to designate a private sector organization to lead implementation of HIE.

The Federal program – named the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act – is briefly described in the sidebar.

HITECH Funding

HITECH is a component of the economic stimulus program passed by Congress in 2009. It provides \$2 billion to “facilitate and expand the electronic movement and use of health information.” HITECH is being administered by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC).

The Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) is the designated recipient of HITECH funding in Washington. HCA expects to receive \$11.3M sometime during the first quarter of 2010, perhaps as early as January 15, 2010.

A strategic and operational plan must be completed by March 15, 2010, to receive full HITECH funding going forward.

*Health Information Exchange (HIE) is the term for sharing data **among** enterprise trading partners rather than **within** a single health enterprise*

ABOUT ONEHEALTHPORT

OneHealthPort is a Health Technology Management Organization created in 2002 by local health care organizations to streamline and accelerate the exchange of business and clinical information in the Northwest.

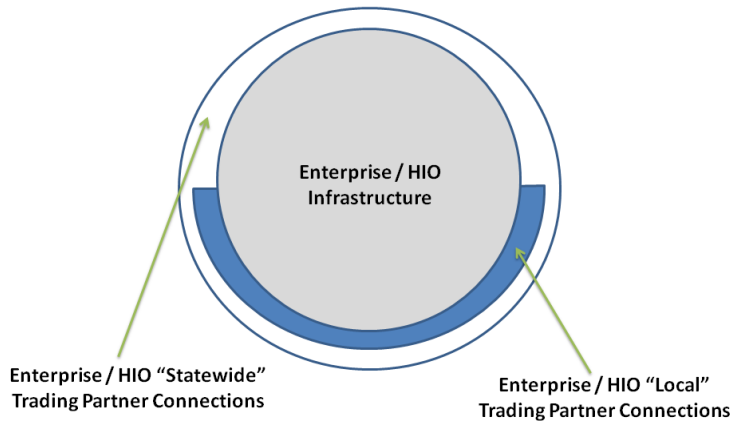
OneHealthPort is not compensated for its work as lead HIE organization; it is funded through the generous support of the Washington Healthcare Forum and its board of directors.

For more information about OneHealthPort, visit: www.onehealthport.com.

The Role of OneHealthPort

In response to both the Federal grant opportunity and State law, HCA designated OneHealthPort to serve as the lead HIE organization for Washington. In this role, OneHealthPort is responsible for:

- Leading initial development of HIE in a manner that will comply with the new State law (SB 5501 is now part of the Revised Code of Washington, Chapter 41.05);
- Satisfying the grant objectives of the Federal Health HITECH Act; and
- Attracting private and public sector stakeholders to invest and participate in HIE.

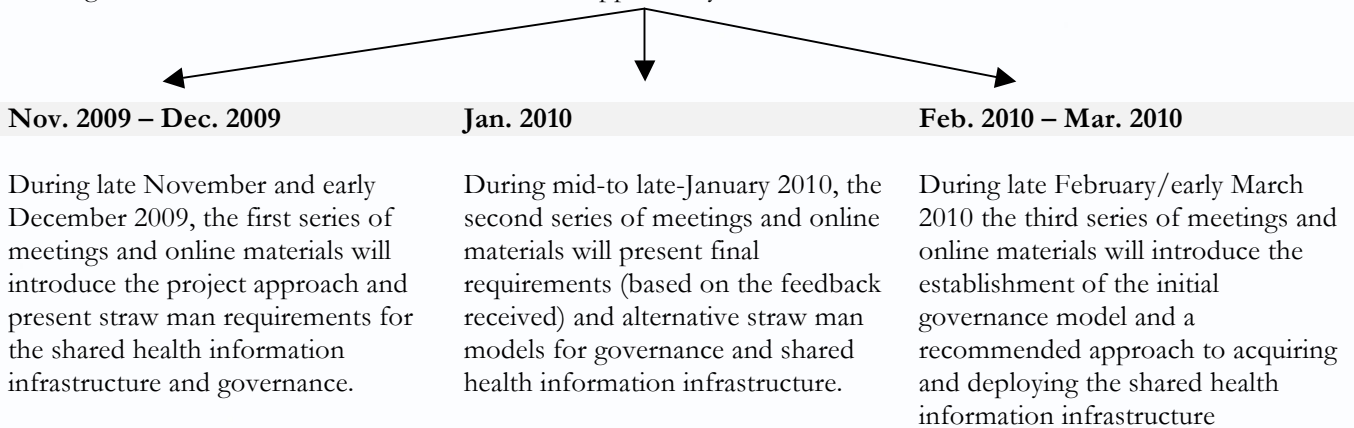


Project Milestones

OneHealthPort will use a combination of face-to-face meetings and virtual collaboration to engage stakeholders in an open and transparent process. Project work will be tightly focused on establishing a governance model and designing the shared elements of the health information infrastructure.

November 2009 – March 2010

A series of meetings will be held across the state with the ability for participants to attend virtually or in person. All meeting materials will be available online, with the opportunity to comment online.



Ideally, on or about March 15, 2010, OneHealthPort and HCA will turn over HIE leadership in Washington state to the new governance model.

Here's How to Get Involved

To make sure you get the latest updates and invitations to meetings, please register at http://www.onehealthport.com/HIE/regform_HIE.php

To keep up with our project initiatives, you can track the progress of the project and participate in the discussion and the development of deliverables at <http://www.onehealthport.com/HIE/index.php>

We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to advance Washington State's Health Information Exchange.