

Response to National Coordinator Health Information Technology (ONCHIT) Request for Information (RFI)

ONCHIT RFI Background

On November 15, 2004 the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONCHIT) released a Request for Information (RFI) seeking public comment regarding the achievement of a widespread interoperability of health information technologies and health information exchange to through a National Health Information Network (NHIN).

Through the RFI, ONCHIT requested information regarding options to deploy, operate and sustain health information exchange. ONCHIT worked on the premise that health information technology organizations, healthcare providers, industry associations and other stakeholders all have important insights to inform future deliberation.

ONCHIT urged collaboration among interested parties with response by January 18, 2005.

Source: <http://www.hhs.gov/healthit/rfi.html>

ONCHIT RFI Goals & Guidelines

ONCHIT identifies the primary impetus for considering a NHIN as achieving interoperability of health information technologies used in the mainstream delivery of health care in America.

The RFI was structured to gain a working definition of a NHIN, and to understand key interoperability barriers and enablers.

The RFI also sought definitions of appropriate models for the NHIN, in the context of regional and national considerations.

RFI drew commentary on the following areas:

- Organizational and Business Framework
- Management and Operational Considerations
- Standards and Policies to Achieve Interoperability
- Financial and/or Regulatory Incentives and Legal Considerations

Source: <http://www.hhs.gov/healthit/rfi.html>

HIMSS EHRVA Response Rationale

The HIMSS EHR Vendor Association (EHRVA) is committed to supporting national efforts relative to health information interoperability, standards, performance, and quality measures.

As the result of collaboration between member vendors, the HIMSS EHRVA has provided a multi-tiered response to the ONCHIT RFI representing an unprecedented consensus among organizations that frequently diverge on many issues of policy, business and philosophy.

The unique and unified perspective of HIMSS EHRVA in relation to healthcare information management qualified the group well for a response on behalf of healthcare IT stakeholders, in keeping with the following priorities:

- Promote rapid adoption of EHR technology to ultimately improve the quality of patient care and the productivity of the healthcare system
- Provide leadership for healthcare IT customers by offering a fair representation of their interests in governmental and non-governmental processes impacting EHR adoption and development
- Work together to solidify a universal standard for interoperability between vendors - which will in turn remove a major barrier to EHR adoption
- Use the collective knowledge of HIMSS EHRVA members to gain insight into EHR acceleration opportunities
- Engaging in ongoing, topical workgroups to support the specific goals of EHR adoption acceleration (including security, interoperability and agreed-upon standards)

In addition to responding on behalf of the association, HIMSS EHRVA has been an active participant in the development of the Collaborative Response authored by Connecting for Health. This broad spectrum response incorporates supporting analyses and comments from a diverse group of participants including AHIMA, AMIA, ANSI HISB, CITL, Connecting for Health, the eHealth Initiative, HIMSS, the HIMSS EHRVA, HL-7, Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise, Internet2, the Liberty Alliance and the National Alliance for Healthcare Information Technology.

HIMSS EHRVA fully endorses this collaborative effort and references the collective responses in the EHRVA submission. Additionally, the group has leveraged its extensive common experience of developing and implementing EHR software to develop a deeper response in several areas.

This secondary level of response to the ONCHIT RFI is an elaboration on specific architectural considerations and includes an implementation "roadmap" containing the possible next steps for implementing these proposals.

View full response documents:

[RFI_CoverLetter_HIMSS_EHRVA.pdf](#)

[EHRVA_Response_to_ONCHIT_RFI-FINAL1.pdf](#)

[RFIRelease011805_final.pdf](#)

[Full_document.pdf](#)

For more information on the Collaborative Response visit www.connectingforhealth.org