

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS
RESOLUTION SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO
PROMOTE HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Resolution Summary

In 2004, President Bush set a goal for most Americans to have an electronic health record by 2014. At the same time he called for the creation of a National Health Information Network to connect those records with each other.

A 2005 RAND Corporation report concluded that a widely adopted and properly implemented health information system would produce savings of \$77 billion or more annually through increased efficiency within the health care system. Also more than \$154 billion in health and safety benefit savings would accrue from reduce illness and prolonged lives. But these savings come at a cost. RAND estimated that nationwide implementation of health IT by 90 percent of physicians and hospitals over a 15 year period would cost \$8 billion per year.

The “American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009” (ARRA), authorizes \$20 billion to assist in the development of a robust health information technology (IT) infrastructure. The law formally codifies the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC), which is responsible for coordinating the health IT programs created by the law; endorsing certification and standards; leading the committees that fall under the ONC; and updating the Federal Health IT Strategic Plan. ARRA authorizes \$17.2 billion in incentives through Medicare and Medicaid to assist providers in adopting health IT. From 2011-2015, physicians that demonstrate “meaningful use” of electronic health record (EHR) technology and performance during the reporting period of each payment year will be eligible for positive payment incentives. Beginning in 2015, physicians who are not meaningfully using EHRs will receive negative Medicare payment updates.

Additional Resource Information

The Council of State Governments: Trends in America publications
Health Information Technology at
<http://www.csg.org/knowledgecenter/docs/FocusOnHealthIT.pdf>

Health Information Technology: Facts and Figures at
http://www.csg.org/knowledgecenter/docs/TIA_HealthIT.pdf

RAND Corporation, *Health Information Technology*
Can HIT Lower Costs and Improve Quality? at
http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB9136/index1.html

E-Health Initiative at <http://www.ehealthinitiative.org/>

CSG Management Directives

Management Directive #1: Copies of this resolution will be sent to the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and appropriate legislative leaders throughout the country and the nation's governors.

Management Directive #2: CSG staff will post the approved resolution on CSG's Web site and make it available through its regular communication venues at the state and local level to ensure its distribution to state legislative leaders.

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WHEREAS, health information technology is the use of computer applications to aid in the practice of medicine, including the use of electronic medical records-keeping, databases for clinical decision-making and electronic prescribing of medications;

WHEREAS, research has shown that effective use of electronic health records can reduce costs by avoiding duplicate medical tests, reducing the use of unnecessary services and increasing efficiency in billing;

WHEREAS, electronic prescribing and medical records have the ability to reduce medical errors and dangerous drug interactions;

WHEREAS, health information technology can support drug monitoring programs aimed at preventing prescription fraud and abuse;

WHEREAS, data collected through the widespread use of health information technology could be used to promote the most effective medical treatments at the lowest costs;

WHEREAS, consumers are calling for strict privacy provisions to ensure that their personal medical records are secure;

WHEREAS, the widespread adoption of health information technology was estimated to create \$80 billion in cost savings in a 2005 study by the RAND Corporation;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Veterans Health Administration has been successfully using health information technology for nearly a decade and has improved quality and outcomes for its patients;

WHEREAS, adoption of health information technology is currently a financial burden for many physicians' offices and hospitals;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments applauds provisions included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that provide funding for states to support the adoption of health information technology; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on the federal government to continue to lead the effort to implement a nationwide network of health information technology systems and devise standards that ensure private-sector and state-supported systems are interoperable; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments urges the federal government to encourage providers to adopt secure, effective health information technology systems.

Adopted this ____Day of November, 2009 at the CSG Annual Conference in La Quinta, California

Governor Joe Manchin III, West Virginia
2009 CSG President

Sen. Bart Davis, Idaho
2009 CSG Chair