

# January 2024 eNews

Welcome to the OHA's Health Information Technology (IT) eNewsletter! Here you will find updates on health IT in Oregon and at the federal level. For a deeper dive into health IT in Oregon check out the [Policy and Program Updates](#). If there are specific items you would like to see in this newsletter, please send ideas to [HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov](mailto:HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov).

## Health IT Oversight Council (HITOC)

### Draft Oregon Strategic Plan for Health Information Technology, 2024-2028

HITOC develops Oregon's Strategic Plan for Health IT to provide high-level priorities, guidance, and direction for health IT over the next five years. After many months of work, OHA is pleased to share that HITOC's [Draft Oregon Strategic Plan for Health IT, 2024-2028](#) is now available on the [HITOC website](#) and will be the focus of the [February HITOC meeting](#).

The Strategic Plan includes HITOC's Vision, Goals, Principles, Strategies, and Activities for health IT efforts for the benefit of statewide progress. The Strategies focus on patients and consumers, electronic health records (EHRs), health information exchange (HIE), community information exchange (CIE), interoperability, and governance. The plan was developed over a multi-year process involving HITOC meetings, two Workgroups, and extensive community engagement (see input summarized here: [Community Engagement and Input Report 2018-2023](#)).

Have thoughts about the draft Strategic Plan? Engagement in HITOC's work is ongoing, and HITOC welcomes public comment either at its meetings or in writing at any time to [HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov](mailto:HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov). *See more information at the end of the newsletter about public comment.*

### February Meeting

HITOC's next meeting is [February 1](#) from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. Members will review the draft Strategic Plan referenced above, and may decide to approve the draft for the Oregon Health Policy Board's review. As always, a public comment period will be available: refer to the [meeting agenda](#) for times or email [HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov](mailto:HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov).

### HITOC Member Recruitment

HITOC is accepting applications for new members! HITOC is looking for candidates who have strong lived and professional experience with health IT and how it impacts people in Oregon. Ideal candidates are committed to eliminating health inequities and ensuring health system transformation efforts are supported by health IT.

To ensure equitable representation, and based on known gaps in current representation, HITOC is seeking diverse representatives from all areas of the State, especially:

- **Behavioral health organizations**
- **Community-based organizations and social services**
- **Coordinated Care Organizations (CCO)** and health plans
- **Health care consumers**, including **people with disabilities** and consumer **advocates**
- People with experience working and/or living in **long-term care**
- **Students and youth** involved in health IT

- **Geographic representation**, particularly those who have experience with remote or sparsely populated areas such as Central or Eastern Oregon
- Representation from **racially and culturally diverse communities**

Technology vendors are not eligible to serve on HITOC but may be considered for workgroups or subcommittees. The Tribal seat is currently open. Recruitment for this seat is managed through OHA Tribal Affairs and is at the discretion of the Tribes.

To apply, complete both the [Membership Application Qualtrics survey](#) and the [supplemental membership application \(aplicación combinada en español\)](#). The application is now open and will close 2/14/2024. See HITOC's [Member Recruitment page](#) for full details.

## Federal Highlights

### Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement (TEFCA) Implementation

On December 12, 2023, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra, HHS Deputy Secretary Andrea Palm, National Coordinator for Health Information Technology Micky Tripathi, and other federal leaders celebrated TEFCA exchange becoming operational at a Common Agreement signing event at HHS headquarters.

At the event, the following five organizations that completed the rigorous TEFCA onboarding process were officially designated as Qualified Health Information Networks, or QHINs:

- eHealth Exchange
- Epic Nexus
- Health Gorilla
- KONZA
- MedAllies

Within 48 hours of launch, more than 1200 organizations were live on the exchanges, and users had initiated approximately 1000 transactions, including individuals accessing their own health information. Visit [The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology \(ONC\) website](#) to learn more.

### Health Data, Technology, and Interoperability: Certification Program Updates, Algorithm Transparency, and Information Sharing (HTI-1) Final Rule

In this final rule, the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) implements provisions of the [21st Century Cures Act](#), makes updates to the ONC Health IT Certification Program including new and updated standards, certification criteria, and implementation specifications in 45 CFR Part 170, establishes a new baseline version of the United States Core Data for Interoperability (USCDI), and provides enhancements to support information sharing through updates to the information blocking regulations. The updates support improved care delivery, interoperability, and health equity initiatives.

#### Rule Highlights

- Implements the Cures Act's "EHR Reporting Program" to require transparent reporting on different types of certified health IT metrics through the new "Insights" Condition and Maintenance of Certification.
- Provides updates to the information blocking regulations in response to feedback from affected parties.

- Establishes first of its kind transparency requirements for the artificial intelligence (AI) and other predictive algorithms that are part of certified health IT.
- Adopts USCDI Version 3 to replace USCDI Version 1 as the baseline USCDI standard as of January 1, 2026.
- Updates the Certification Program’s standards, criteria, and requirements.

[Several fact sheets](#) are available for more information on specific topics within the final rule.

## Upcoming Events: OHA Health IT Meetings/Events

- February 1, 2024, 12:30-3:30 (Virtual): [HITOC Meeting](#)
- April 11, 2024, 12:30-3:30 (Virtual): [HITOC Meeting](#)
- April 25, 2024, 1:00-4:00 (Virtual): CCO [HIT Advisory Group \(HITAG\) quarterly meeting](#)

### Want to weigh in on OHA’s Health IT work? How to make public comment:

OHA’s Health IT committee and workgroup meetings (i.e., HITOC, HIE Workgroup, HITAG) are open to the public, and public comment is always welcome at the meeting during the specified time or in writing at any time. Public comment is an important part of OHA’s committee work and is an opportunity for members of the public to provide input and feedback to the Committee or Workgroup.

**Meetings:** Typically, the public comment period is held at the end of each meeting. There may occasionally be more than one comment period. Members of the public are asked to comment or post in the chat only during this period, and to keep verbal comments to about 2 minutes. The public comment period is held solely for the public to share their thoughts with the Committee or Workgroup. Committee members are unlikely to ask questions or respond to public comment directly but consider public comments during committee work. If you know before the meeting that you’d like to provide public comment, you can email [HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov](mailto:HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov) to sign up. If you’d like to provide public comment during the meeting, you can message one of the hosts to sign-up. If you are unable to message, please speak up during the open public comment period.

**Written Comment:** You can also send written public comment to [HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov](mailto:HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov) at any time. To be included in the materials a meeting please submit the comment no less than 2 business days before the intended meeting. Please specify which group it is for – HITOC, HIE Workgroup, or HITAG. Written comment is emailed out and posted as part of meeting materials.

**Have questions about public comment?** We want to hear from you! Please email [HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov](mailto:HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov)

Everyone has a right to know about and use Oregon Health Authority (OHA) programs and services. OHA provides free help. Some examples of the free help OHA can provide are:

- CART (live captions)
- Sign language and spoken language interpreters
- Written materials in other languages
- Braille
- Large print
- Audio and other formats

If you need help or have questions, please email [HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov](mailto:HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov) or contact (503) 373-7859 at least 48 hours before the meeting. OHA will make every effort to provide services for requests made closer to the meeting.