

PART A—PROMOTION OF HEALTH INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY

**§ 300jj-11. Office of the National Coordinator for
Health Information Technology**

(a) Establishment

There is established within the Department of Health and Human Services an Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (referred to in this section as the “Office”). The Office shall be headed by a National Coordinator who shall be appointed by the Secretary and shall report directly to the Secretary.

(b) Purpose

The National Coordinator shall perform the duties under subsection (c) in a manner consistent with the development of a nationwide health information technology infrastructure that allows for the electronic use and exchange of information and that—

(1) ensures that each patient’s health information is secure and protected, in accordance with applicable law;

(2) improves health care quality, reduces medical errors, reduces health disparities, and advances the delivery of patient-centered medical care;

(3) reduces health care costs resulting from inefficiency, medical errors, inappropriate care, duplicative care, and incomplete information;

(4) provides appropriate information to help guide medical decisions at the time and place of care;

(5) ensures the inclusion of meaningful public input in such development of such infrastructure;

(6) improves the coordination of care and information among hospitals, laboratories, physician offices, and other entities through an effective infrastructure for the secure and authorized exchange of health care information;

(7) improves public health activities and facilitates the early identification and rapid response to public health threats and emergencies, including bioterror events and infectious disease outbreaks;

(8) facilitates health and clinical research and health care quality;

(9) promotes early detection, prevention, and management of chronic diseases;

(10) promotes a more effective marketplace, greater competition, greater systems analysis, increased consumer choice, and improved outcomes in health care services; and

(11) improves efforts to reduce health disparities.

(c) Duties of the National Coordinator

(1) Standards

The National Coordinator shall—

(A) review and determine whether to endorse each standard, implementation specification, and certification criterion for the electronic exchange and use of health information that is recommended by the HIT Standards Committee under section 300jj-13 of this title for purposes of adoption under section 300jj-14 of this title;

(B) make such determinations under subparagraph (A), and report to the Secretary such determinations, not later than 45 days after the date the recommendation is received by the Coordinator; and

(C) review Federal health information technology investments to ensure that Federal health information technology programs are meeting the objectives of the strategic plan published under paragraph (3).

(2) HIT policy coordination

(A) In general

The National Coordinator shall coordinate health information technology policy and programs of the Department with those of other relevant executive branch agencies with a goal of avoiding duplication of efforts and of helping to ensure that each agency undertakes health information technology activities primarily within the areas of its greatest expertise and technical capability and in a manner towards a coordinated national goal.

(B) HIT policy and standards committees

The National Coordinator shall be a leading member in the establishment and operations of the HIT Policy Committee and the HIT Standards Committee and shall serve as a liaison among those two Committees and the Federal Government.

(3) Strategic plan

(A) In general

The National Coordinator shall, in consultation with other appropriate Federal agencies (including the National Institute of Standards and Technology), update the Federal Health IT Strategic Plan (developed as of June 3, 2008) to include specific objectives, milestones, and metrics with respect to the following:

(i) The electronic exchange and use of health information and the enterprise integration of such information.

(ii) The utilization of an electronic health record for each person in the United States by 2014.

(iii) The incorporation of privacy and security protections for the electronic exchange of an individual’s individually identifiable health information.

(iv) Ensuring security methods to ensure appropriate authorization and electronic authentication of health information and specifying technologies or methodologies for rendering health information unusable, unreadable, or indecipherable.

(v) Specifying a framework for coordination and flow of recommendations and policies under this part among the Secretary, the National Coordinator, the HIT Policy Committee, the HIT Standards Committee, and other health information exchanges and other relevant entities.

(vi) Methods to foster the public understanding of health information technology.

(vii) Strategies to enhance the use of health information technology in improv-

ing the quality of health care, reducing medical errors, reducing health disparities, improving public health, increasing prevention and coordination with community resources, and improving the continuity of care among health care settings.

(viii) Specific plans for ensuring that populations with unique needs, such as children, are appropriately addressed in the technology design, as appropriate, which may include technology that automates enrollment and retention for eligible individuals.

(B) Collaboration

The strategic plan shall be updated through collaboration of public and private entities.

(C) Measurable outcome goals

The strategic plan update shall include measurable outcome goals.

(D) Publication

The National Coordinator shall republish the strategic plan, including all updates.

(4) Website

The National Coordinator shall maintain and frequently update an Internet website on which there is posted information on the work, schedules, reports, recommendations, and other information to ensure transparency in promotion of a nationwide health information technology infrastructure.

(5) Certification

(A) In general

The National Coordinator, in consultation with the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, shall keep or recognize a program or programs for the voluntary certification of health information technology as being in compliance with applicable certification criteria adopted under this part. Such program shall include, as appropriate, testing of the technology in accordance with section 17911(b) of this title.

(B) Certification criteria described

In this subchapter, the term “certification criteria” means, with respect to standards and implementation specifications for health information technology, criteria to establish that the technology meets such standards and implementation specifications.

(6) Reports and publications

(A) Report on additional funding or authority needed

Not later than 12 months after February 17, 2009, the National Coordinator shall submit to the appropriate committees of jurisdiction of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on any additional funding or authority the Coordinator or the HIT Policy Committee or HIT Standards Committee requires to evaluate and develop standards, implementation specifications, and certification criteria, or to achieve full participation of stakeholders in the adoption of a nationwide health information tech-

nology infrastructure that allows for the electronic use and exchange of health information.

(B) Implementation report

The National Coordinator shall prepare a report that identifies lessons learned from major public and private health care systems in their implementation of health information technology, including information on whether the technologies and practices developed by such systems may be applicable to and usable in whole or in part by other health care providers.

(C) Assessment of impact of HIT on communities with health disparities and uninsured, underinsured, and medically underserved areas

The National Coordinator shall assess and publish the impact of health information technology in communities with health disparities and in areas with a high proportion of individuals who are uninsured, underinsured, and medically underserved individuals (including urban and rural areas) and identify practices to increase the adoption of such technology by health care providers in such communities, and the use of health information technology to reduce and better manage chronic diseases.

(D) Evaluation of benefits and costs of the electronic use and exchange of health information

The National Coordinator shall evaluate and publish evidence on the benefits and costs of the electronic use and exchange of health information and assess to whom these benefits and costs accrue.

(E) Resource requirements

The National Coordinator shall estimate and publish resources required annually to reach the goal of utilization of an electronic health record for each person in the United States by 2014, including—

- (i) the required level of Federal funding;
- (ii) expectations for regional, State, and private investment;
- (iii) the expected contributions by volunteers to activities for the utilization of such records; and
- (iv) the resources needed to establish a health information technology workforce sufficient to support this effort (including education programs in medical informatics and health information management).

(7) Assistance

The National Coordinator may provide financial assistance to consumer advocacy groups and not-for-profit entities that work in the public interest for purposes of defraying the cost to such groups and entities to participate under, whether in whole or in part, the National Technology Transfer Act of 1995 (15 U.S.C. 272 note).¹

¹ See References in Text note below.

(8) Governance for nationwide health information network

The National Coordinator shall establish a governance mechanism for the nationwide health information network.

(d) Detail of Federal employees

(1) In general

Upon the request of the National Coordinator, the head of any Federal agency is authorized to detail, with or without reimbursement from the Office, any of the personnel of such agency to the Office to assist it in carrying out its duties under this section.

(2) Effect of detail

Any detail of personnel under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) not interrupt or otherwise affect the civil service status or privileges of the Federal employee; and

(B) be in addition to any other staff of the Department employed by the National Coordinator.

(3) Acceptance of detailees

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Office may accept detailed personnel from other Federal agencies without regard to whether the agency described under paragraph (1) is reimbursed.

(e) Chief Privacy Officer of the Office of the National Coordinator

Not later than 12 months after February 17, 2009, the Secretary shall appoint a Chief Privacy Officer of the Office of the National Coordinator, whose duty it shall be to advise the National Coordinator on privacy, security, and data stewardship of electronic health information and to coordinate with other Federal agencies (and similar privacy officers in such agencies), with State and regional efforts, and with foreign countries with regard to the privacy, security, and data stewardship of electronic individually identifiable health information.

(July 1, 1944, ch. 373, title XXX, §3001, as added Pub. L. 111-5, div. A, title XIII, §13101, Feb. 17, 2009, 123 Stat. 230.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The National Technology Transfer Act of 1995 (15 U.S.C. 272 note), referred to in subsec. (c)(7), probably means section 12(d) of Pub. L. 104-113, known as the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995, which is set out as a note under section 272 of Title 15, Commerce and Trade.

§ 300jj-12. HIT Policy Committee

(a) Establishment

There is established a HIT Policy Committee to make policy recommendations to the National Coordinator relating to the implementation of a nationwide health information technology infrastructure, including implementation of the strategic plan described in section 300jj-11(c)(3) of this title.

(b) Duties

(1) Recommendations on health information technology infrastructure

The HIT Policy Committee shall recommend a policy framework for the development and

adoption of a nationwide health information technology infrastructure that permits the electronic exchange and use of health information as is consistent with the strategic plan under section 300jj-11(c)(3) of this title and that includes the recommendations under paragraph (2). The Committee shall update such recommendations and make new recommendations as appropriate.

(2) Specific areas of standard development

(A) In general

The HIT Policy Committee shall recommend the areas in which standards, implementation specifications, and certification criteria are needed for the electronic exchange and use of health information for purposes of adoption under section 300jj-14 of this title and shall recommend an order of priority for the development, harmonization, and recognition of such standards, specifications, and certification criteria among the areas so recommended. Such standards and implementation specifications shall include named standards, architectures, and software schemes for the authentication and security of individually identifiable health information and other information as needed to ensure the reproducible development of common solutions across disparate entities.

(B) Areas required for consideration

For purposes of subparagraph (A), the HIT Policy Committee shall make recommendations for at least the following areas:

(i) Technologies that protect the privacy of health information and promote security in a qualified electronic health record, including for the segmentation and protection from disclosure of specific and sensitive individually identifiable health information with the goal of minimizing the reluctance of patients to seek care (or disclose information about a condition) because of privacy concerns, in accordance with applicable law, and for the use and disclosure of limited data sets of such information.

(ii) A nationwide health information technology infrastructure that allows for the electronic use and accurate exchange of health information.

(iii) The utilization of a certified electronic health record for each person in the United States by 2014.

(iv) Technologies that as a part of a qualified electronic health record allow for an accounting of disclosures made by a covered entity (as defined for purposes of regulations promulgated under section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996) for purposes of treatment, payment, and health care operations (as such terms are defined for purposes of such regulations).

(v) The use of certified electronic health records to improve the quality of health care, such as by promoting the coordination of health care and improving continuity of health care among health care pro-