



HB 6441

The Illinois Health Information Exchange and Technology Act

What does HB 6441 propose to do?

HB 6441 will create the Illinois Health Information Exchange and Technology Act and establish a State authority to operate the Illinois Health Information Exchange.

What is Health Information Exchange?

Health Information Exchange (HIE) enables the use of electronic health records by healthcare providers and patients in a private, secure, interoperable environment. It gives doctors and other clinicians a more comprehensive understanding of their patients' full medical histories, which helps them deliver better care. Electronic health records provide patients with more information about the care and treatments they receive and empower patients to be more involved in the healthcare decisions that impact them and their families.

Why is a Statewide HIE Necessary?

Supporting the adoption of electronic health records among healthcare providers in Illinois, and building the infrastructure necessary to make HIE possible, are essential components of the State's plan to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of healthcare. The Illinois Health Information Exchange and Technology Act will create a State authority with public and private representation to facilitate the secure exchange of electronic health records to deliver better healthcare. This public-private model has already been adopted with success in other states.

What are the Primary Benefits of a Statewide HIE?

- Improved healthcare quality and outcomes for Illinoisans
- Reduced health disparities
- Reduced medical errors and duplicative services
- Enhanced coordination of patient care among providers
- Controlled healthcare costs
- Increased patient ability to manage their family's care

Why Should Illinois Create a Statewide HIE Now?

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (federal stimulus), established HIE as a national priority and provides financial incentives, education, and training opportunities to states to significantly accelerate the adoption of electronic health records and build HIE infrastructure. Governor Quinn has made HIE a priority component of his administration's efforts to maximize Illinois' share of federal dollars to transform healthcare, develop the state workforce and expand broadband access to all regions of the state.

The State Health Information Exchange Cooperative Agreement grant program was established by the federal government to promote the development of state HIEs across the country; Illinois was awarded \$18.8 million for this purpose. The Illinois Office of Health Information Technology, which was recently created by the Governor's Executive Order, is the State entity responsible for coordinating all of Illinois' HIE efforts, overseeing this federal grant and supporting the creation of a statewide HIE.

What other Federal Funding is at Stake?

The ARRA dedicates more than \$30 billion to programs that support HIE; including grants for broadband access, technology infrastructure, and technical assistance to healthcare providers. Beginning in late 2010, Medicaid and Medicare providers and hospitals that adopt electronic health records and meet federal “meaningful use” criteria will be eligible to receive payment incentives that are 100% federally funded. These incentives total \$17 billion nationally and could bring hundreds of millions of new federal dollars to Illinois healthcare providers over the next 10 years. The eligibility criteria for the provider incentive payments include the ability to exchange data and report quality measures. The State, therefore, has an urgent and compelling interest in accelerating the adoption of electronic health records and developing mechanisms for providers to exchange data, and improve the quality of healthcare.

How will the Privacy and Security of Health Data be Protected?

Ensuring the privacy and security of Illinois patients’ health information is a cornerstone of HIE. The State has been participating in national privacy and security planning efforts since 2007, with work already completed through the Health Information Security and Privacy Collaboration (HISPC), an initiative of the US Department of Health and Human Services. The HISPC established the foundation for strong privacy and data security protections for the sharing of patient information across providers. In addition, new federal regulations have been established to reduce security breaches and additional federal privacy and security standards will be required for all certified electronic health record systems. The State authority created by HB 6441 will ensure strict adherence to state and federal laws put in place to protect patient health information, including delineating patient rights, creating patient consent forms, defining parameters for health researchers and outlining responsibilities of healthcare workers’ safeguarding of health information.

Why is a State Authority Needed?

Building a statewide HIE requires infrastructure that would be cost-prohibitive for any one public or private entity to develop; reliance on individual and local exchanges would not allow the participation of all providers and patients and result in further health disparities and fragmented care among geographic regions and socio-economic groups. A State authority will be established with public and private governance to run the day-to-day operations of the HIE, enforce privacy and security policies and ensure that all Illinois patients and providers have access to the benefits of a statewide exchange.

How will healthcare Stakeholders Provide Input?

Support for HIE in Illinois has been well-established and growing since 2005, when Public Act 94-646 created the Electronic Health Records Task Force. The report mandated by that Act recommended that Illinois create a public-private partnership governed by a board of directors representative of healthcare stakeholders. HB 6441 is the product of a comprehensive and broad-based community engagement process that includes consumer advocate organizations, physicians and other clinicians, behavioral health providers, insurers, hospitals, universities, employers, and state and local government agencies. These and other stakeholders are represented on the Illinois HIE Advisory Committee, which meets monthly to provide input on the State’s efforts.

For more information on the State’s HIE efforts, please visit www.hie.illinois.gov; for information on the federal programs, please visit www.healthit.hhs.gov.

List of organizations supporting HB 6441 (in formation):

AARP

Aetna

Alliance of Chicago Community Health Services

American Academy of Pediatrics, Illinois Chapter

Blessing Hospital

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois

Chicago Community Trust

Children's Memorial Hospital

Cook County Health and Hospitals System

Hammond Henry Hospital

Healthcare Consortium of Illinois

Health Information and Management Systems Society

IFMC-IL

Illinois Academy of Family Physicians

Illinois Chamber of Commerce

Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network

Illinois Hospital Association

Illinois Public Health Institute

Illinois Science and Technology Coalition

Illinois State Medical Society

McAlpine Consulting for Growth

Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council

Northwestern Memorial Hospital

Quality Quest for Health of Illinois

Rush Health System

SEIU Healthcare Illinois

Sinai Health System

SUPERVALU/Jewel-Osco

UIC School of Public Health

UnitedHealthcare