



Informed Patient Identity Integrity Solution Coalition

Summary

Along with AHIMA, CHIME, the HIT Now Coalition and others, AMIA participates in the HIMSS-led Coalition for an Informed Patient Identity Integrity Solution. In 1996 HIPAA directed HHS to develop a unique health identifier for healthcare, but the *1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act* signed into law (PL 105-277) which stated: “SEC. 516: None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to “promulgate” or adopt any final standard under section 1173(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320d-2(b)) providing for, or providing for the assignment of, a unique health identifier for an individual (except in an individual's capacity as an employer or a health care provider), until legislation is enacted specifically approving the standard.”

The Coalition is working to delete this prohibiting language from the fiscal year 2012 Labor, HHS Appropriations bill, and to substitute language that would have HHS conduct a study of the health information exchange patient data matching issue, and in addition have the Government Accountability Office (GAO) conduct a study of available technologies for data matching.

The Coalition’s strategy is based on the following messages:

- Health IT has made gigantic strides toward improving clinical care, enhancing patient safety and outcomes, and controlling costs.
- Frequent mismatches between patients and clinical data is a serious and growing patient safety issue.
- Matching the right patient with the right data is critical to achieving the full benefits of health IT and interoperability.
- Sharing patient data will mean safer and more efficient care, while enhancing patient safety, privacy and security.
- The capacity to safely and securely transmit patient data across systems is essential to the transformation of healthcare in America.
- A consistent strategy does not mean a national identity number, card, or any specific technology.
- As a first step, we request GAO to study currently available technologies for achieving a consistent patient-data matching strategy and the cost-benefit of a national strategy.
- Informed by the GAO findings, we would aim to replace current Appropriations language to allow HHS to explore a consistent patient-data matching strategy.



In the near future Congressman Jim Moran of Virginia will be circulating a “Dear Colleague” letter asking fellow Members of Congress to join him in signing a request to the General Accountability Office study of the informed patient-data matching strategy issue on a priority basis. Rep. Moran intends to focus his Dear Colleague letter on Representatives Dave Camp (R-MI), Sander Levin (D-MI), Fred Upton (R-MI) and Lois Capps (D-CA) because of their important leadership roles on key U.S. House of Representatives committees.

The Coalition is encouraging messages of support to these four Members of Congress, especially from individuals who live in California or Michigan.

For more information about AMIA’s activities in this effort, please contact Meryl Bloomrosen at Meryl@amia.org.