

Message From The Chairman Justin Barnes (Greenway Medical)

It is my distinct privilege to serve as Chairman of the EHR Association, and represent our industry as we work to ensure that EHR-related legislation, standards initiatives, certification programs and other HIT activities accurately and appropriately consider impacts on our businesses and our customers. Along with Andy Ury, MD (McKesson), EHR Association Vice-Chair, I encourage you to read and share the information in this newsletter to better understand the work we've been doing and the value that accrues to all Association members. I hope you and your colleagues will join in our volunteer efforts to support this work. And I hope to see representatives from all our member companies at the EHR Association meeting on April 3 at HIMSS09 in Chicago!

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Your EHR Association at HIMSS09

Many of you will be in Chicago for HIMSS09 April 4-8. We encourage you to attend our annual all-member meeting on Friday, April 3 from 3:30 to 5:30 at the Hyatt McCormick Place (Ballroom D-E). This is an opportunity to meet and network with Association leaders and members, get a detailed update on accomplishments and priorities, and add your voice to planning for the upcoming year. The meeting will be followed by a reception and dinner. Last year's guest speaker was Rob Kolodner, MD, National Coordinator for Health IT. We expect to have an equally impressive and important speaker in Chicago. (Your company may send two representatives to these events. Please RSVP to Amenia Bussell, HIMSS Manager for the EHR Association at abusell@himss.org.)

And don't miss the Interoperability Showcase in booth #7750, the largest booth on the show floor, entirely devoted to interoperability in action

– with 13 Association member companies demonstrating their connected EHR systems. Tours will start every 15 minutes to guide attendees through clinical scenarios. In past years, the Showcase has attracted government and industry leaders to see the work of HITSP and other groups dedicated to achieving interoperability.

The EHR Association will have a kiosk in the Interoperability Showcase, as well as its own booth (#6963).

Look for a full schedule of Association meetings and activities at HIMSS09 on our intranet site at himss.ehrvendorassoc.webexone.com/r.asp?a=1662901&vid=50988.

ANNOUNCEMENT

We need volunteers from member companies to staff these areas during exhibit hours.

Please support the Association's efforts to educate the market about our efforts to achieve interoperability, support certification and provide leadership in accelerating EHR adoption. A few hours of your time will be greatly appreciated.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Signed into law by President Obama on February 17th, 2009. Learn what this means to your company and to your customers.

All of us have been following the economic stimulus package since late last year when it became apparent that health IT would be an important component of this landmark legislation. Many thanks to all of you who reached out to your Congressional representatives or worked with your EHR Association colleagues to provide input to the legislation.

Through the efforts of Association representatives, we worked to ensure that the privacy component of the bill is practical for our member companies and our customers. We also worked to limit funding for open source EHRs, and to ensure that the investments made with HITSP and CCHIT will be leveraged going forward.

We also succeeded in getting a seat on the National eHealth Collaborative (NeHC, which is currently the AHIC successor) or its replacement, to ensure vendor representation at the highest-level of decision making.

Now it's time to understand what this will mean to our industry. Building on the presentation given during the last all-member call, we're developing materials to help your organization navigate this complex subject. Look for the presentation on our web site, www.himssehra.org, by March 15th. Use these materials to educate your colleagues and customers.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Standards and Interoperability Workgroup will launch a series of web casts to facilitate efficient access to specifications and implementation support across our product engineering teams. Take advantage of this unique opportunity to learn from interoperability leaders by participating in this Workgroup.

This important work needs to be supported by all EHR Association members, particularly now that certification is so clearly tied to funding. Your organization will benefit from being proactively engaged in understanding and influencing requirements. Contact Rick Reeves at rickr@cpsinet.com for more information.

EHR Association Workgroup Updates

Government Relations – Mickey McGlynn, Chair (Siemens) and Charlie Jarvis, Vice Chair (NextGen)

The Government Relations Workgroup, supported by various members of the Executive Committee, has been on overdrive during the past many weeks as the economic stimulus legislation has evolved (see Important Information above). Many of you heard Mickey's presentation on the February 10th all-member call that summarized the bill as it stood a few days before final passage by the House and Senate, and Conference Committee changes that were agreed to by both the House and Senate on February 13th.

Look for the updated PPT reflecting the final legislation to be available to all EHR Association member companies for internal use as well for discussions with your customers. The Government Relations Workgroup will continue to work on educational materials and events as many of the implementation details of this important legislation become known. The EHR Association calendar for HIMSS09 will highlight additional educational opportunities and town hall discussions with HIT leaders.

In anticipation of important HIT legislation being passed in 2009, Mickey and Charlie identified key issues for the Association --

privacy and security, national HIT leadership and the possibility of a government-sponsored EHR. Position papers on each of these topics were developed by consensus and provided to the membership. Go to www.himssehra.org/ASP/statements.asp to download these important documents.

Value to your organization: Never before has there been such a sense of urgency for the adoption of EHRs and HIT in general. Use these materials to educate your colleagues on the opportunities and impacts on your business, as well as your customers.

Standards and Interoperability – Charles Parisot, Chair (GE)

If you aren't familiar with the Interoperability Roadmap developed by the Standards and Interoperability Workgroup and originally published in 2005, it is important to realize that it reflects unprecedented collaboration among EHR member firms to present a practical strategy for achieving standards-based interoperability among disparate HIT systems.

Charles and his Workgroup will present the latest Roadmap update to the March 10th all-member meeting for approval, in

EHR Association Workgroup Updates Continued

hopes of having it available at HIMSS09 in Chicago. This effort is particularly timely given that interoperability is a key requirement for EHR certification, one of the criteria that healthcare providers must meet to be eligible for ARRA incentives. Plan to review this updated Roadmap for the vote on March 10.

Value to your organization: This update will build on the robustness of our initial analysis and the strength of our proposed approach which provided guidance to HITSP and CCHIT in this important area. This is the strength of our Association and the value of our consensus positions! When the updated Roadmap is available, share it with your executive team and your development staff. It will be important for your customers to know that your organization is aligned with this strategy.

The IHE Connect-a-thon took place in Chicago February 23-27, where 88 companies (13 are Association members) have tested interoperability among 126 different systems. The room was buzzing with activity as thousands of choreographed tests were executed by over 300 engineers. Charles Parisot (GE) presented for the EHR Association on February 24 as part of the panel on “Implementing Interoperable HIT Systems” with speakers from the NHIN, CCHIT, SSA and IHE leadership.

Value to your organization: With HITSP’s engagement for the third year, and CCHIT’s participation for the first time this year, the IHE Connect-a-thon has become the premier resource for vendors to address interoperability challenges in preparation for certification. This collaborative effort ensures that products interoperate before implementation at customer sites, thus significantly reducing deployment costs and risks.

CCHIT – Rick Reeves, Chair (CPSI)

The CCHIT Workgroup has been engaged from the very beginning of the certification initiative in reviewing and providing input to requirements. This painstaking effort has been supported by many of your fellow EHR Association members who bring unmatched experience in the development and design of EHRs and other HIT solutions.

For each set of proposed requirements, Rick leads the review of CCHIT spreadsheets and collation of comments, then conducts a consensus call with membership to gain support. Proposed changes and comments are then summarized in a letter to Mark Leavitt, MD, CCHIT Chairman. Most recently, we concluded review of second draft requirements for e-prescribing security. Rick also led the effort to review CCHIT expansion plans and coordinate EHR Association comments.

What’s coming up from CCHIT? Rick is preparing for review of final draft for 2009 certifications. Of course, he’ll convene his Workgroup to review any additional documents released for public comment.

Value to your company: With the increased importance of certification, it is even more important to understand how your development cycles and customer support requirements for new releases will be impacted. The Association’s work in this area helps all member companies by providing early insights and the opportunity to engage in direct dialog with CCHIT to ensure that requirements are practical and deliver real benefits to your customers.

Acceleration – Charlene Underwood, Chair (Siemens) and Jacob Reider, Vice Chair (Allscripts)

The Acceleration Workgroup has been focused on how EHRs support quality initiatives. Through its relationship with the Collaborative for Performance Measure Integration with EHR Systems (The Collaborative), the Association works with NCQA and the AMA to facilitate the integration of performance measures into EHRs. To check out the Reference Guide for EHR vendors, go to www.ama-assn.org/go/collaborative.

Charlene has also led the effort to collect case studies from Association member companies that demonstrate quantifiable benefits achieved with a variety of EHR systems. Look for the new flier that summarizes these case studies at HIMSS09 in the EHR Association booth #6963. Of course, we’ll post it on the web site as well.

Value to your company: With EHRs at the center of intensified focus and investment by government and provider organizations, it is important to demonstrate that these technologies deliver real benefits through improving the quality and efficiency of care. With the Association on the front lines, your organization has the benefit of being associated with a non-competitive effort to prove the value of EHRs in the transformation of healthcare delivery.

Membership – Justin Barnes, Chair (Greenway Medical) and Barbara Hobbs, Vice Chair (Meditech)

We’re always interested in attracting new members to join the Association, and will be actively recruiting EHR companies during HIMSS09. If you would like to support this effort, contact Amenia Bussell at abusell@himss.org for more information.

Communications – Mike Campana, Chair (Siemens) and Maria Rudolph, Vice Chair (e-MDs)

This Workgroup is primarily focused on getting the word out – to members, as well as to the industry at large – regarding the work of the Association. Please send your comments and suggestions on this newsletter, as well as other opportunities for EHR Association publicity, to Amenia Bussell at abusell@himss.org.