

**Minnesota
E-Health Initiative**

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- I. **Program Type:** Public-Private Partnership
- II. **Established:** 2004
- III. **Service Population:** All citizens of Minnesota, and those seeking care at Minnesota's hospitals or clinics.
- IV. **Program Description:** Minnesota has undertaken a public-private partnership with a vision to "accelerate the adoption and use of Health Information Technology (HIT) to improve healthcare quality, increase patient safety, reduce healthcare costs and enable individuals and communities to make the best possible health decisions." The initiative is intended to be statewide and global in its vision.

Through a broadly representative advisory committee, we are making advances in coordinating the work of private and public sector health care and health-related organizations on HIT issues. We have adopted the national framework for action, and are focusing on developing consensus and action steps on each of four goals: informing clinical practice, interconnecting clinicians, personalizing care, and improving population health. The steering committee identifies a focus topic for discussion and action, receives background information, and provides a recommendation for action on the topic. The focus is what policy issues need to be addressed to accelerate HIT adoption. All of our work is viewed through the lens of the consumer, ensuring that actions which are taken are focused on empowering consumers with knowledge, connecting clinicians to improve quality of care and protecting communities through disaster readiness and response.

- V. **Staffing:** The e-Health Initiative is staffed and coordinated out of the Minnesota Department of Health, through the Department's Office of Health Policy, Statistics, and Informatics. The initiative is staffed with approximately 2.5 FTEs, and also includes considerable volunteer time of staff from private sector health care organizations and other state agencies. The work of the e-health steering committee is also closely coordinated with the work of Governor Tim Pawlenty's Health Care Cabinet.
- VI. **Results:** The Initiative has reported to the Minnesota legislature in January 2005, coordinated a unified Minnesota response to the National Health Information Network RFI in 2005, held a statewide HIT summit in June 2005 (attended by over 400 people), and have established a non-profit Health Information Exchange, governed by a diverse board of directors. We have also

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made significant progress on advancing each of the four goals and assessing the status of HIT in Minnesota. The Initiative is currently sponsoring the application for funding to identify barriers and variations in privacy and security laws and practices. A statewide summit is being planned for June 29th, 2006.

- VII. **Leading Organization/s:** The Minnesota Department of Health is the lead organization in staffing and coordinating the work of the Initiative, and works closely with the Governor's Health Cabinet. In addition to these two lead organizations, the success of the Initiative hinges on successful collaborative work with the key partner organizations.
- VIII. **Key Partners:** Major health care systems in Minnesota, Minnesota's hospitals, Minnesota's HMOs and licensed health plans, the Minnesota Medical Association, Minnesota Nurses Association, Academic institutions and researchers, Mayo Clinics, long term care organizations, local public health departments, consumer groups, and local HIMSS representatives. The Minnesota Legislature has shown a great interest in this topic and is also a key partner in the project.
- IX. **Lessons Learned:** The role of a committed and neutral convening body is critical to making coordinated progress on HIT issues. It is possible to simultaneously address multiple key areas of HIT advancement while also doing so in a collaborative manner. The inclusion of public health as a component of the e-Health Initiative ensures that our health and health care systems are linked to improve the overall health outcomes of our population. Leadership commitment from both public and private sector health care organizations is a prerequisite for the success of any broad, multiple stakeholder organization such as the e-Health Initiative.
- X. **Funding:** There was no specific funding provided to staff the Initiative. Rather, existing staff at the Minnesota Department of Health have been used for support. A number of funding options including incentives are under consideration for projects or HIT development. Even simple changes are helpful. Last year we modified a rule for an existing state rural health grant program, resulting in new applications for HIT development.