

# Health IT Advisory Council

January 20, 2022



# Agenda

Agenda Item	Time
Welcome & Call to Order	1:00 PM
New Member Introduction: Kelly Sinko Steuber, Dir. Healthcare Innovation, OHS	1:05 PM
Public Comment	1:10 PM
<b><u>Council Action:</u></b> Approval of Minutes: December 16, 2021	1:15 PM
Connie Update & 2022 Goals	1:17 PM
<b><u>Council Action:</u></b> Review and Discuss Draft Health Information Technology Annual Report	1:27 PM
Level Setting Purpose and Role of HITAC	1:50 PM
2022 HITAC Strategic Plan	2:05 PM
Discussion on Establishing HIE Sustainability Workgroup	2:20 PM
Announcements & General Discussion	2:30 PM
Wrap up & Adjournment	2:35 PM

# Welcome and Call to Order

# **New Member Introduction: Kelly Sinko Steuber**

*Dr. Joe Quaranta*

# Public Comment

(2 minutes per commenter)

# Approval of Meeting Minutes:

December 16, 2021

# Connie Update

Jenn Searls, Executive Director

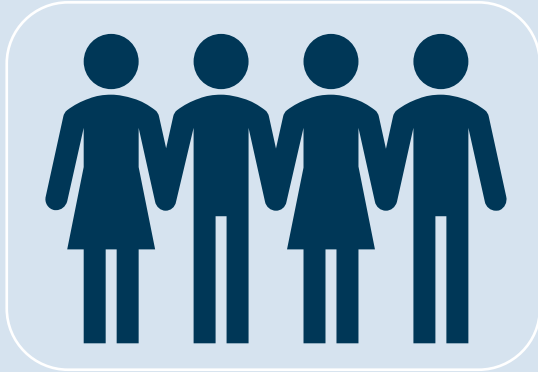
Health IT Advisory Council

January 20, 2021



# Connie Updates

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**Team**



**Education &  
Outreach**



**Services &  
Use Cases**



# Calendar Year 2021 Goals

1

## Connection Goals

- 50% of hospitals sending clinical data
- 50% of labs sending lab data
- 50% of providers sending clinical data

2

## Financial Goal

- Sustainability plan developed and approved

3

## Use Case Goals

- Three initial use cases approved and implemented
- Two additional use cases in demonstration phase

4

## Governance and Staffing Goals

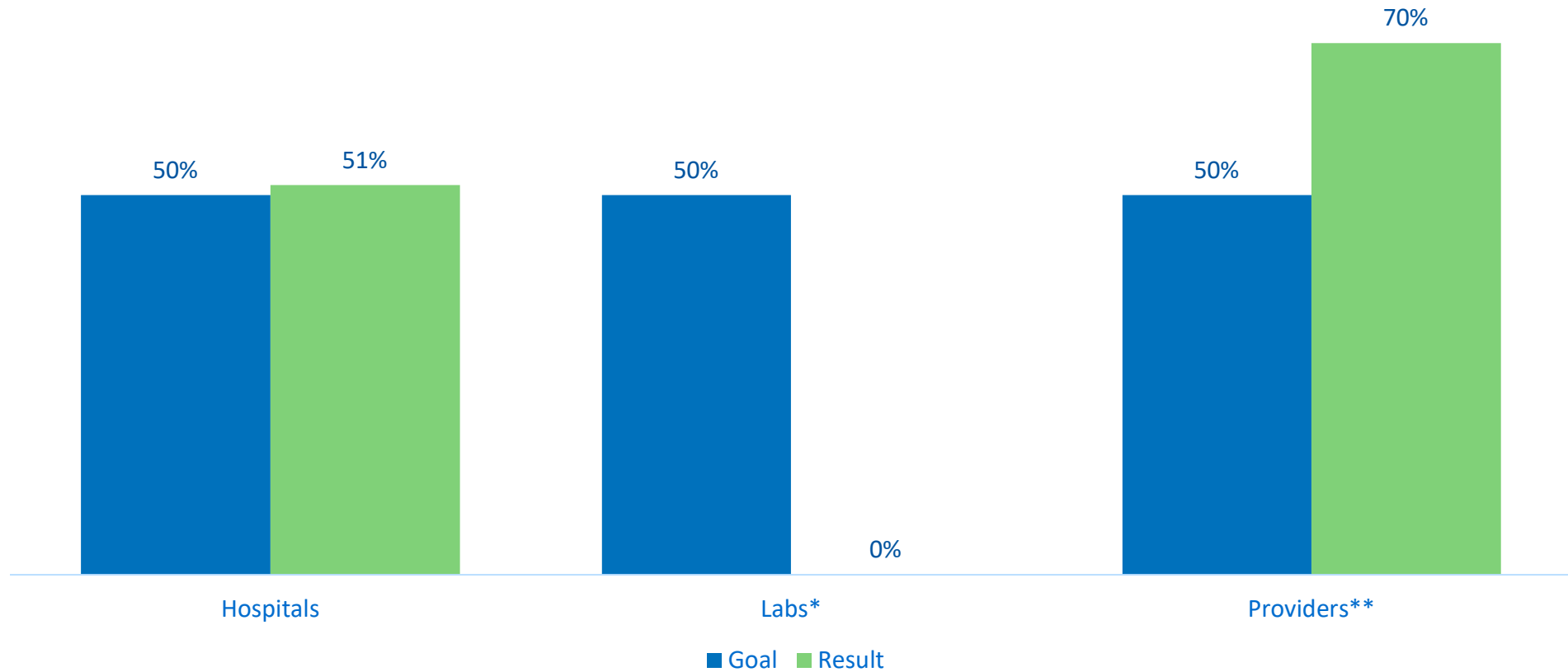
- Board fully appointed
- Connie fully staffed to meet milestones





# Connection Goals

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\*Quest authorized to “copy forward” data to Connie for 100+ organizations

\*\*as submitted under the FY2022 IAPD



# Other Goals

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## Financial Goal

- Sustainability plan presented and approved at August 2021 Board Meeting

## Use Case Goals

- Three initial use cases approved and implemented
  - Empanelment, Encounter Notification, eConsent, Clinical Data
- Two additional uses cases in development
  - PDMP, Best Possible Medication History, Image Exchange

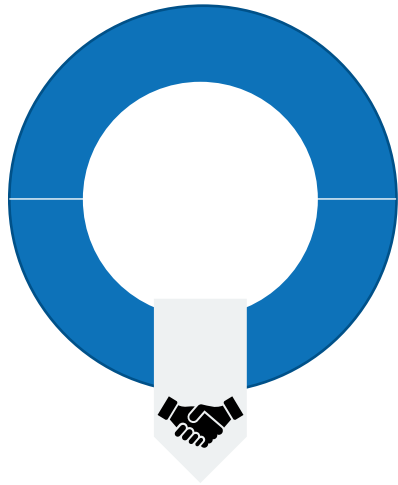
## Governance and Staffing

- Board fully appointed by November 2021
- Connie fully staffed



# FY 2022 Goals: Promoting Interoperability

## Stakeholder Value



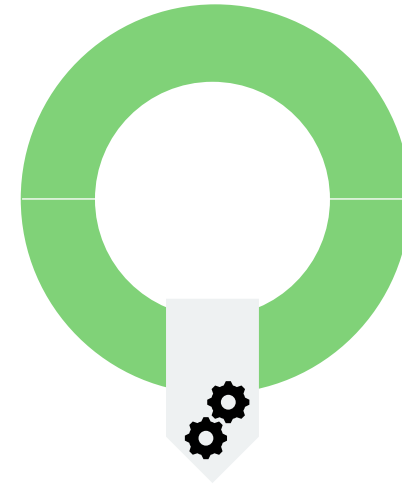
- Design, develop, and implement 3 new services/use cases
- Design and develop utilization measures to assess effectiveness of Connie

## Connectivity



- Enable processes for hospitals to meet statutory mandate for connectivity
- Enable processes for labs to meet statutory mandate for connectivity

## Operational Excellence



- Develop and implement fee structure for Connie
- Develop and implement consumer facing communications strategy

# Review and Discuss Draft Health Information Technology Annual Report

*Sumit Sajnani, OHS HITO &  
Carol Robinson, CEO  
CedarBridge Group*

# 2021 Connecticut Annual Health IT Report – Topic Areas

1. Development of the Statewide Health IT Plan
2. Establishment of Electronic Data Standards
3. Implementation of the Statewide HIE, Connie
4. Recommendations for Policy, Regulatory, and Legislative Changes
5. Other initiatives to promote the state's health information technology and exchange goals



# Topic Area 1: *Development of the Statewide Health IT Plan*

Focus Area 1	Sustain and increase use of statewide HIE services
Focus Area 2	Implement systems to improve health equity and address health-related social needs
Focus Area 3	Improve service coordination and data sharing across state HHS agencies
Focus Area 4	Support behavioral health providers with the adoption of EHR and HIE services
Focus Area 5	Protecting individuals' health information privacy
Focus Area 6	Establish electronic data standards to facilitate development of integrated electronic health information systems

## Activities and Accomplishments:

- Statewide environmental scan between February and May 2021
  - ❑ Captured perspectives from **more than 1200 HHS stakeholders**, including 504 consumers
- Identified six strategic focus areas for optimizing community health information and data exchange
- Reviewed by the Council throughout the planning timeframe, with vote of acceptance at December 2021 meeting

## Some of the Key Themes for Policymakers:

- Funding for care coordination platform or hosted-EHR for behavioral health providers and community-based organizations with technical assistance is needed to support whole-person care
- Temporary federal assistance due to the pandemic will help optimize public health systems; must create efficiencies that will allow systems to be maintained over time
- Creating a neutral office for consumers' digital privacy rights and/or expanding the Office of the Healthcare Advocate would make Connecticut a leader in addressing patient privacy concerns
- Ensure alignment between federal and state health data standards. The Standards Advisory Committee can serve as a coordinating body

# Topic Area 2: *Establishment of Electronic Data Standards*



## Activities and Accomplishments:

- OHS is establishing **standard requirements and an implementation plan for the collection of race, ethnicity, and language data (REL)** from “providers capable of connecting to Connie”, as set forth by Senate Bill 1, passed by the Connecticut General Assembly during the 2021 session.
- As part of the Statewide Health IT Plan, the Health IT Advisory Council will charter a standing **Standards Advisory Committee** to address Connecticut’s statutory requirements for data standards
  - Make recommendations for updating state statutes
  - Provide annual report to OHS Executive Director & HITO
  - Monitor national regulatory and policy guidance on health data standards
  - Leverage work done by the Office of Policy and Management and the State Data Officer

## Key Themes for Policymakers:

- Caution is warranted when setting state standards as federal standards are developing
- Misalignment between state and federal standards creates uncertainty, and increases costs for organizations required to meet various standards



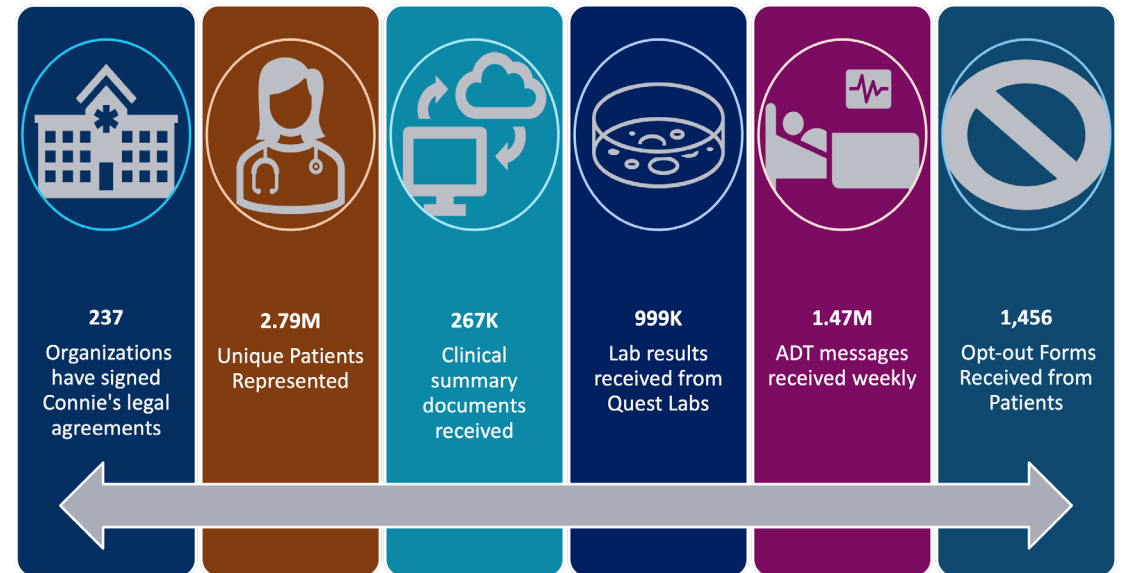
# Topic Area 3: *Implementation of the Statewide HIE, Connie*

## Activities and Accomplishments:

- Connie officially opened for data exchange services on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021
- Significant progress bringing on participants between July and September 2021
- CMS certification obtained for initial use cases of empanelment and clinical data exchange

## Key theme for policymakers: Connie's sustainability is of critical importance to the state

- The Health IT Advisory Council will be chartering a **Sustainability Support Workgroup** to examine funding options for Connie, in a public benefit utility model
- Connie has potential to provide other priority services, including:
  - ❑ Quality measurement and reporting to support value-based payment (VBP) models
  - ❑ Shared services hub to manage master data needs for CIE/HIE services
  - ❑ Provide a Public Health Gateway to priority DPH systems; connect other HHS agencies' data systems over time
  - ❑ Provide community health records with integrated SDoH data
  - ❑ Establish a *Best Possible Medication History* service, informed by work of MRPC



## Topic Area 4: *Recommendations for Policy, Regulatory, Legislative Changes*



No changes are recommended at this time.

Attention will be given to the regulatory and policy needs of the Statewide Health IT Plan, as action steps are implemented, and for other state priorities, as needed.

# Topic Area 5: *Other Initiatives Promoting State Health IT*



- Twenty-three health plans contributed data to the Connecticut All-Payer Claims Database (APCD) in 2021; the APCD supported OHS in developing numerous cost and quality measurement initiatives including
  - health care cost growth benchmarks
  - primary care spending targets
  - consumer cost estimation
  - measuring the impact of healthcare costs on a household's ability to afford basic needs
- OHS submitted several health IT-related projects from Connecticut's Statewide Health IT Plan for consideration by the Governor's Office for **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding**
- The previous work completed by the Medication Reconciliation and Polypharmacy Committee (MRPC) and the subject matter expertise of the **MRPC members** are now supporting **Connie's Best Possible Medication History Workgroup**

# Level Setting Purpose and Role of HITAC

*Sumit Sajnani, OHS HITO &  
Amy Tibor, OHS*

# Distinguishing Roles: HITAC vs. Connie Board of Directors

## HITAC Purpose (from Charter):

The purpose of the Council is to advise the Executive Director of the Office of Health Strategy (OHS) and the Health Information Technology Officer (HITO) in developing priorities and policy recommendations to advance the state's health information technology (health IT) and health information exchange (HIE) efforts and goals. The Council shall provide guidance to the OHS Executive Director and the HITO on governance, oversight, and accountability measures for health IT and HIE initiatives to ensure success in achieving the state's goals for improving health, improving healthcare delivery, and containing escalating costs of healthcare across Connecticut."

**A statutorily sanctioned thinktank providing advice and guidance on Statewide Health IT including the HIE**

# Distinguishing Roles (cont.): HITAC vs. Connie BOD

## Connie BOD Power & Duties (from bylaws):

“Powers and Duties. The property and affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by or under the direction of the Board of Directors (the “Board”). The Board may authorize and direct the Corporation to exercise all such powers and do all such things as may be exercised or done by the Corporation but subject nevertheless to the provisions of the Corporation’s Certificate of Incorporation (the “Certificate”), these Amended and Restated Bylaws (as amended, the “Bylaws”), the laws of the State of Connecticut and the laws of the United States of America.”

**Governance and stewardship of the HIE through strategy, oversight, accountability, and advocacy.**

# Annual HITAC Charter Refresher

## 9 Articles within HITAC Charter

Article 1	Name (HITAC)
Article 2	Purpose
Article 3	Membership
Article 4	Officers
Article 5	Committees and Work Groups
Article 6	Duties of the Council
<b>Article 7</b>	<b>Operating Procedures</b>
Article 8	Duties of OHS
Article 9	Governance Relationship

## 8 Sections within Article 7: Operating Procedures

Sect. 1	All records maintained by OHS
Sect. 2	Meetings may be held virtually*
Sect. 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings governed by Robert's Rules, Abbrev.</li> <li>• Majority of members shall constitute a quorum</li> </ul>
Sect. 4	Chair may solicit agenda items from members in advance of meetings and establish agendas in collaboration with OHS designated staff
Sect. 5	Meetings must be published on Secretary of State website and OHS website
Sect. 6	All votes shall be posted on OHS website within 48 hours of meeting
Sect. 7	All draft (and approved) minutes shall be posted on OHS website within 7 calendar days.
Sect. 8	Membership and attendance reviewed annually; members must attend at least 60% of total meetings in calendar year.

\*Meetings held solely by electronic means must be noticed accordingly

# 2022 HITAC Strategic Plan

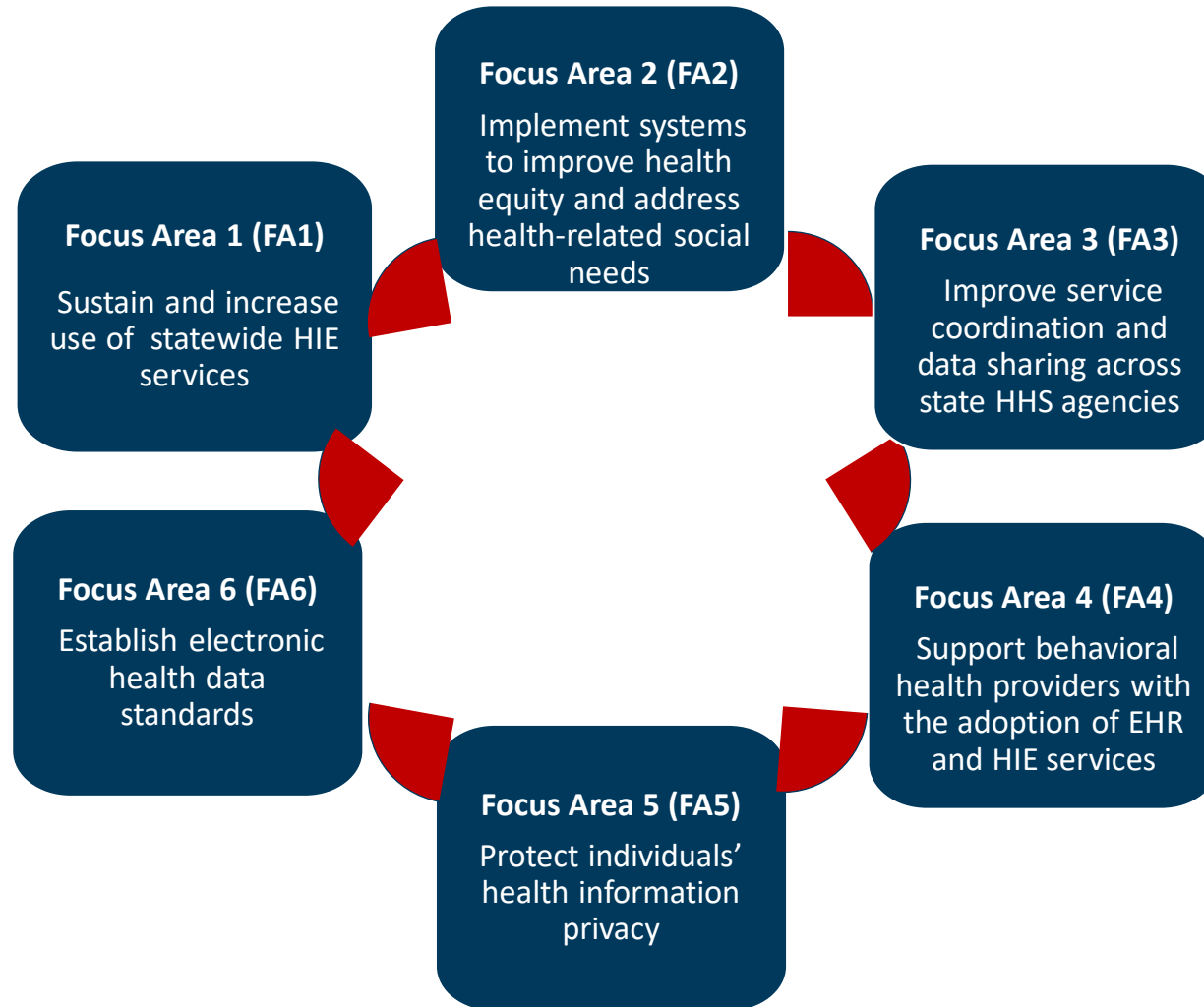
## 2022 Discussion Topics

with High-Level Action Steps, Planning Discussion Prompts, and Opportunities for Coordination and Alignment









# Statewide Health IT Plan Priority Focus Areas



# 2022 Strategic Plan Focus Areas

 = Activities in 2022 Strategic Plan  
 = Other Considerations in 2022 Plan




## Focus Area 1: Sustain and Increase Use of Statewide HIE Services (Connie)

-  1 Establish a HITAC Sustainability Workgroup
-  2 Evaluate how best to optimize Connie for public health data exchange and seek ways to use Connie's services to improve data availability and reporting to state-operated data systems, positioning the entity to deliver on its value proposition. Look to make Connie infrastructure a shared public utility service.
- 3 Measure and assess how providers utilize Connie at the point of care to improve care quality, care coordination, and drive better health outcomes for individual patients and communities.
-  4 Evaluate Connie's current technical and business analyst resources for developing a centralized electronic quality measurement and reporting system for providers and health plans in value-based payment models.
- 5 Establishing payment incentives from payers for HIE onboarding and regional extension centers for smaller provider practices to access HIE technical assistance and trainings.
-  6 Conduct a public education campaign to improve public awareness of Connie as well as educating providers on the [Final Federal Rule on Information Blocking](#) to encourage greater portability and interoperability of patient health information.

# 2022 Strategic Plan Focus Areas

-  = Activities in 2022 Strategic Plan
-  = Other Considerations in 2022 Plan




## Focus Area 2: Implement Systems to Improve Health Equity and Address Health-Related Social Needs

-  1 Appointing a HITAC Social Risk Data Design Group to analyze current social needs screening processes, referral management options, and community-based organization (CBO) data sharing capabilities to support statewide social risk data standards.
-  2 Exploring support for CBOs and social service agencies to adopt IT systems that help track and coordinate care, and to support staffing, training, and ongoing technical assistance.
-  3 Developing a Health Equity Dashboard with a public facing web interface to identify health disparities at the community level and monitor interventions.
- 4 Establishing a neutral Community Information Exchange (CIE) Feasibility Planning Committee to validate functional requirements and evaluate existing CIE infrastructures in Connecticut for shared services.

# 2022 Strategic Plan Focus Areas

-  = Activities in 2022 Strategic Plan
-  = Other Considerations in 2022 Plan





## Focus Area 3: Improve Service Coordination and Data Sharing Across HHS Agencies

-  1 Collaboration between Department of Public Health (DPH) and OHS to evaluate local public health IT infrastructure needs and provide recommendations; evaluating the feasibility of a central Public Health Gateway for reporting and querying high-priority public health registries; assessing the benefits and issues related to establishing an electronic gateway hosted by DPH versus Connie, or another third-party.
-  2 Creating a joint working group of various HHS agencies wishing to connect data systems to Connie for data sharing to evaluate and set appropriate policies and procedures, system integration standards, data elements, data fields, and data sets to be shared, consent requirements, and other details to accelerate agency data systems ability to connect to Connie.
-  3 Establishing and facilitating the HITAC Person-Centered Services Collaborative (PCSC), a multi-agency working group with the objective of delivering more efficient and coordinated services with accurate identity matching of vulnerable individuals receiving services from multiple agencies. The PCSC will identify pilot initiatives and implement cross-agency data sharing policies, workflows, and technical integrations between high priority data systems.
- 4 Establishing a workgroup for technical interoperability of HHS data systems including development of standards.

# 2022 Strategic Plan Focus Areas

-  = Activities in 2022 Strategic Plan
-  = Other Considerations in 2022 Plan

## Focus Area 4: Support Behavioral Health Providers with Adoption of Electronic Health Record (HER) and HIE Services


-  1 Conducting listening sessions with providers on use of IT and HIE services while maintaining patient confidentiality.
-  2 Analyzing behavioral health EHR systems and reviewing environmental scan survey data to understand current EHR adoption rates; Determining whether provider incentive payments or access to a state-hosted system is a better option.
-  3 Planning, developing, and implementing a financial incentive program for behavioral health providers with TA and training.
-  4 Developing an educational campaign for behavioral health providers and patients on the benefits and risks of health information exchange, focusing on ways to ensure data privacy while making sure the individual's care team can access the right information at the right time to provide the best care possible.

# 2022 Strategic Plan Focus Areas

-  = Activities in 2022 Strategic Plan
-  = Other Considerations in 2022 Plan

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## Focus Area 5: Protect Individuals' Health Information Privacy

-  1 Planning and conducting public consumer town halls/listening sessions on HIE with state officials and Connie leadership.
  - 2 Providing recommendations on standardized statewide consent management protocols.
  - 3 Considering the establishment of a new Patient Health Information Protection Office within Connecticut state government.
  - 4 Assess electronic consent management software solutions for state agency needs.
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# 2022 Strategic Plan Focus Areas

-  = Activities in 2022 Strategic Plan
-  = Other Considerations in 2022 Plan

## Focus Area 6: Establish Electronic Data Standards to Facilitate Development of Integrated Electronic Health Information Systems

- 1 Developing a HITAC Standards Advisory Committee to provide recommendations on statutory changes needed relative to health data standards.
- 2 Writing legislative concept papers to be submitted by OHS to the Connecticut General Assembly with recommendations on changes to statute related to health data standards, particularly based on federal requirements and opportunities.
- 3 Evaluating opportunities for advancing standards in state technology procurements, upgrades, and in data exchange pilots.

# 2022 HITAC Strategic Plan

## Advisory Council Topics for 2022

(timing and topics subject to change)

January

- ❖ **Gating, Guiding, and Guard Railing:** *The importance of stakeholder advisory groups in shaping public policies and keeping public/private investments on track.*
- ❖ **Mapping the Six Priority Focus Areas in the Statewide Health IT Plan to Connecticut Strategic Initiatives.**

February

- ❖ **How should Connecticut ensure HIE services are sustained?**

Additional topics will be brought to the Advisory Council in 2022. The timing for these and other topics to be addressed by the Council will be dependent on several factors that will be discussed and monitored. In collaboration and prioritization with HITAC, additional topics may include:

- ❖ How can the state best support communities with care and service coordination?
- ❖ How should implementation success of the Statewide Health IT Plan be defined and measured?
- ❖ Which Connie services offer ambulatory providers the best short and long-term value, and how can that value be measured?
- ❖ How will Connecticut ensure individuals have timely access to their health information, understand their rights, and are given agency over who may view, share, or use their information?



# 2022 Strategic Plan: Action Steps (timing TBD)

## Strategic Focus Area 1

- Establish HITAC Sustainability Workgroup
- Evaluate how best to optimize Connie for public health data exchange and positioning the entity to deliver on value proposition
- Evaluate developing a centralized electronic quality measurement and reporting system w/ Connie
- Conduct a public education campaign to improve public awareness of Connie

## Strategic Focus Area 2

- Establish a HITAC Social Risk Data Design Group
- Support CBOs w/ IT infrastructure funding, training, and technical assistance
- Developing a Health Equity Dashboard

## Strategic Focus Area 3

- Evaluate feasibility of a central *Public Health Gateway* for reporting and querying high-priority public health registries
- Create joint working group of HHS agencies wishing to connect data systems to Connie for data sharing
- Establish HHS Person-Centered Services Collaborative (PCSC) with OPM to improve cross-agency data sharing and explore connecting HHS data assets to Connie

## Strategic Focus Area 4

- Conduct listening sessions with BH providers on their concerns and desires for use of IT and HIE services
- Determine whether BH provider incentive payments for EHR/HIE adoption or access to a state-hosted system is a better option
- Conduct an educational campaign for BH providers and patients on the benefits and risks of health information exchange

## Strategic Focus Area 5

- Planning and conducting public consumer town halls/listening sessions on HIE with state officials and Connie leadership

## Strategic Focus Area 6

- Developing a HITAC Standards Advisory Committee

# 2022 HITAC Strategic Plan: Next Steps

- Council Feedback (brief survey to prioritize items for 2022 HITAC agenda)
- Survey Outcome (February meeting)
- ARPA Funding

# Discussion on Establishing HIE Sustainability Workgroup

*Sumit Sajnani, OHS HITO*

# Sustainability of HIE Services – Background and Next Steps

## February – May 2021

- Environmental Scan conducted to inform 5-year HIT Plan
- Sustainability of HIE emerges as top priority for healthcare leaders and policymakers
- Connie officially opens for data exchange services (May 3)

## July - October 2021

- Recommendation to establish workgroup presented to HITAC
- Sustainability planning activities begin
- Presentations and discussion topics include: changes in the Health IT and HIE infrastructure, overview of operational and financially viable HIE's over time, examples of national HIE's, and strategies for increasing the use and sustainability of Connie

## Today

- Discussion on Establishing Sustainability Workgroup chartered by HITAC

## January – March (proposed)

- Establish workgroup membership
- Develop Charter
- Hold Meetings (8 weeks over Feb & March)
- Present recommendations to HITAC (March)

# Announcements & General Discussion

*Dr. Joe Quaranta, Council Members*

# Wrap Up and Meeting Adjournment

**Next Meeting Date:**  
February 17, 2022

# Contact Information

## OHS Contact for January 2022 HITAC Meeting

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<https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/HIT-Work-Groups/Health-IT-Advisory-Council>