



Health Information Technology Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

February 15, 2024 | 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

[Zoom Meeting Recording](#)

Attendance (Members)

Joseph Quaranta (Co-Chair)	R	Josh Scalora, DDS	R	Alan Kaye	X
Sumit Sajnani, OHS HITO (Co-Chair)	R	Josh Wojcik, OSC (Sandra Czunas)	R	Dina Berlyn	R
Gui Woolston, DSS (Sandi Oullette)	R	Adam Prizio, OHA	X	Cassandra Murphy	R
Elizabeth Taylor, DMHAS	X	David Fusco	R	Susan Israel	R
Nicole Taylor, MD, DCF	R	Nicolangelo Scibelli	X	Mark Gildea	R
Sharonda Carlos, DOC (Byron Kennedy)	R	Patricia Checko	R	Rebecca McLear, AHCT	X
Gary Archambault, DPH	R	Lisa Stump	X	Michael Crain	R
Mark Raymond, CIO	R	Patrick Charmel	X	Thomas Woodruff	R

Supporting Leadership

Amy Tibor, OHS	R	Leslie Greer, OHS	R	Heidi Wilson, Connie	R
Olga Armah, OHS	R	Jenn Searls, Connie	R		

In accordance with FOIA statutes re: meetings held by solely by electronic-means: R=attended remotely, IP=attended in person, X=did not attend

Topic	Presenter	Time
1) Welcome and Call to Order	Dr. Joseph Quaranta	1:00 pm
The regularly scheduled HITAC meeting was held virtually on Thursday, February 15, 2024. Dr. Quaranta welcomed members and called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Roll call was conducted and quorum was present.		
2) Public Comment	Members of the Public	1:03 pm
There were no public comments made.		
3) New Member Introduction: Geoffry Hook	Dr. Joseph Quaranta	1:04 pm
New members were introduced later in the meeting.		
4) Action: Approval of Minutes: December 21, 2023	Dr. Joseph Quaranta	1:04 pm
(Vote) Dr. Quaranta requested a motion to approve the December 21, 2023, minutes. The motion was made (Checko) and seconded (Raymond). There was no discussion. Minutes were unanimously approved.		
5) Action: Review and Acceptance of Draft OHS Annual Health IT and HIE Report	Sumit Sajnani, HITO	1:05 pm

Sumit gave a summary presentation on the 2024 Health IT and HIE annual report to the CGA, key highlights included:

- The annual report is statutorily mandated and requires certain updates to be included such as an update on the HIT statewide plan, HIE, data standards, and any recommendations for legislative changes.
- Sumit noted differences and enhancements in this year's report versus previous years.
- The report is marked as draft to allow DSS and others referenced to review and comment. Any material changes made after HITAC accepts the report will be shared with members. Members are welcome to make additional comments through email or via a meeting.
- Sumit described the various sections within the report and gave updates on the following:
 - Each of the six areas of focus identified in the Statewide Health IT Plan:
 1. Sustain and increase use of statewide HIE services.
 2. Implement systems to improve health equity and address health-related social needs.
 3. Improve service coordination and data sharing across state HHS agencies.
 4. Support behavioral health providers with adoption of EHR and HIE services.
 5. Protect individuals' health information privacy.

6. Establish electronic data standards to facilitate development of integrated electronic health information systems.

Alan Kaye inquired about what other states are doing to address concerns identified by provider organizations and what research has been done into addressing those issues. Sumit replied that OHS is looking at four other states with legislation similar to CT. As OHS drafts regulations, part of the process will include looking at what other states have done. Alan encouraged communication with and among the leaders of those HIEs, and suggested a user group or forum be established to explore current and suggested pathways that can be taken. Alan suggested developing a spreadsheet to be shared with HITAC which would include each item and how they are handled in other states as a tool for members to make informed decisions. Sumit referenced the IT report as having some of the information. He agreed with Alan's point and stated that HITAC and the RAS subcommittee would be valuable for this type of feedback.

Pat Checko inquired about the regulatory process timeline. Sumit indicated that part of the legislation that authorizes OHS to develop regulations included policies & procedures which would in effect act as regulations until regulations are done, this is the abbreviated path to have something in lieu of a full approved set of regulations which could take multiple years.

Amy Tibor introduced Jaime Rodriguez as a new member appointed by Senator Looney as a provider of behavioral health services. Jaime introduced herself.

Sumit continued his presentation updates on the following remaining sections of the IT report:

- Data and Interoperability Standards
- Statewide Health Information Exchange
- Recommendations for Policy, Regulatory or Legislative Changes
- Other Initiatives Supporting Health IT including APCD

The full presentation may be viewed here: <https://portal.ct.gov/ohs/hit-work-groups/health-it-advisory-council/meeting-materials/february-15-2024>

(Vote) Dr. Quaranta requested a motion to accept the 2024 OHS Health IT Report. Motion was seconded (Raymond) and seconded (Scalora). Motion passed unanimously.

6) HITAC 2024 Strategic Agenda	Sumit Sajnani, HITO	1:50 pm
Sumit gave an overview of the annual 2024 HITAC strategic agenda. The agenda topics are subject to shift depending on a variety of factors. Sumit stated that a major priority OHS is hoping to complete in 2024 is development of HIE regulations. This is anticipated to begin in April. There is a standing placeholder for monthly updates to HITAC on HIE regulations development.		

The strategic agenda can be viewed on page 37 of the presentation: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/ohs/health-it-advisory-council/agendas/2021-2024-meetings/2-15-24/ohs_hitac_meeting_presentation_02-15-2024.pdf

7) Connie Update	Jenn Searls and Heidi Wilson, Connie	1:55 pm
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Jenn gave a progress update on key Connie activities:

- Onboarding highlights include a partnership with Yale which gives additional image exchange functionality and a new workflow to the organization, Hartford Healthcare is progressing towards image exchange, ECHN is live with labs, and BH Care is now live on Connie.
- Outreach activities include a dinner event with Bristol Hospital, and Connie is refreshing its quarterly webinars.
- Connie is pursuing HITRUST certification. All of Connie's vendors are certified - this will add an extra layer of assurance for clinicians and for patients that Connie is also HITRUST certified.
- A key area of focus for 2023 was achieving critical mass. Jenn described how Connie defines critical mass (95% of hospitals, 75% ambulatory providers, 75% pharmacies, 75% SNFs, and 1 private-state connection). Goals for 2023 included getting to 60% of the way towards critical mass, having at least one state connectivity project in progress, and having a plan for patient access. Jenn shared where Connie landed in reaching these goals at the end of 2023. Jenn presented highlights strategic priorities for FY 2024 to 2026.

Jenn introduced Heidi Wilson to present a patient access update including the status of developing a patient portal, a newly formed Patient and Family Advisory Committee (PFAC), and population health analytics, key highlights included:

- Connie has selected a patient portal vendor, Medicasoft, as the developer of the patient portal – the portal is anticipated to launch in October. Medicasoft has a Patient Health Record (PHR) solution already being used in other states. Heidi described key features of the PHR solution, many of which address future capabilities on Connie's roadmap.
- Membership for the Patient and Family Advisory Committee (PFAC) has been identified and the first meeting will occur in March. Heidi described the member selection process. The group includes a diverse group of individuals which goes beyond race, ethnicity, and language differences. Part of the process included outreach to nonprofit organizations that have health, health equity, or health related social needs as part of their mission or programs.
- Population health analytics is one of Connie's strategic priorities. Connie is working to build aggregated population health reports from rich, patient-level data to assist healthcare organizations in a variety of areas.

8) Connie Privacy, Confidentiality & Security Committee Update	Mark Raymond, CIO, PCSC Chair	2:20 pm
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Mark Raymond provided an update on activities of the PCSC. The committee has talked through a variety of concepts and topics including pursuing HITRUST certification. HITRUST is a methodology and a framework for identifying, managing, and reducing security risks. Mark described the timeline leading up to final certification and validation by the end of the calendar year. Consent is another topic discussed by the group. The default is patients are opted-in to Connie but can opt-out at any time except for 24 CFR Part 2 which requires affirmative opt-in. Mark noted that there is a tool available for patients to do this.

Mark stated that a PCSC member who represented IT security in a hospital setting has departed. Mark described the selection process for filling the vacancy. The group is taking recommendations for applicants.

The floor opened for questions. Dr. Kaye requested metrics around opt-outs in future meetings.

9) Announcements and General Discussion	Dr. Joseph Quaranta	2:25 pm
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Dr. Quaranta invited Geoffrey Hook to introduce himself as a new member of the council. Geoffrey introduced himself as CIO of Nuvance Health. Geoff is appointed by Governor Lamont as a representative of a health system that includes more than one hospital.

Dr. Quaranta announced the departure of Nic Scibelli from HITAC thanking Nic for his many years of service and wishing him well.

10) Wrap Up and Meeting Adjournment	Dr. Joseph Quaranta	2:30 pm
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Next Meeting: March 21, 2024

All meeting information and materials are published on the OHS website:
<https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/HIT-Work-Groups/Health-IT- Advisory-Council>

2-15-24 Meeting presentation:

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/OHS/Health-IT-Advisory-Council/Agendas/2021-2024-Meetings/2-15-24/OHS_HITAC_Meeting_Presentation_02-15-2024.pdf

2-15-24 Zoom Recording:

ctvideo.ct.gov/ohs/HITAC_Meeting_Recording_02-15-24.mp4