



4th Annual Advocacy Day April 7, 2005

Talking Points

Please note in your visits HIMSS statement on these key issues and stress the points below.

Who We Are. The Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) is the healthcare industry's membership organization exclusively focused on providing leadership for the optimal use of healthcare information technology (IT) and management systems for the betterment of human health. Founded in 1961 with offices in Chicago, Washington D.C., and other locations across the country, HIMSS represents more than 15,000 individual members and over 250 member corporations that employ more than 1 million people. HIMSS frames and leads healthcare public policy and industry practices through its advocacy, educational and professional development initiatives designed to promote information and management systems' contributions to ensuring quality patient care.

1. Support the President's FY06 Budget Request

House—Support the President's Budget Request as a minimum

Senate—Support the President's Budget Request as a minimum

Support the President's FY06 Budget request of \$125M (as a minimum) for the Department of Health and Human Services for health information technology (HIT) demonstration initiatives. HIMSS understands that these funds are to be used to fund initiatives managed by Dr. David Brailer, Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONCHIT).

- The US needs a properly funded and maintained national health information infrastructure to facilitate the confidential exchange of data for healthcare delivery - the electronic health record - wherever an individual may need it.
- A NHIN can also enhance the nation's public health system through a great ability to collect and exchange healthcare data to detect public health and possible bioterrorism events
- A NHIN can also provide access to and exchange of health information that can be used by patients, providers, payers, research entities, public health, oversight and policy-makers.
- ONCHIT can coordinate development and construction of such an infrastructure within the federal government and in the private sector, so that the existing multiple efforts to reach a NHIN can be done effectively and efficiently. At the same time, such an office can work with the industry to protect the rights of patients and providers.

2. Join the House or Senate HIT Caucus

House—Join the 21st Century Health Care Caucus

Senate—Join the Senate Steering Committee on Telehealth and Healthcare Informatics

BACKGROUND: These groups of likeminded elected officials support the best use of information technology and management systems to improve the quality of healthcare for all. The caucus' mission is to examine issues and advocate for improvements in our healthcare delivery system that drive quality and efficiency and develop an agenda to promote bipartisan solutions.

ACTION: To join the 21st Century Health Care Caucus, Republican members should contact Michael Baxter (Michael.Baxter@mail.house.gov) in Rep. Tim Murphy's office and Democratic members can contact Michael Zamore (Michael.Zamore@mail.house.gov) in Rep. Patrick Kennedy's office. To join the Senate Steering Committee, please contact Neal Neuberger at nealn@hlthtech.com.

3. Key Facts

- The Institute of Medicine estimates that between 44,000 and 98,000 Americans die each year from medical errors.
- Many more die or have permanent disability because of inappropriate treatments, mistreatments, or missed treatments in ambulatory settings.
- Studies have found that as much as \$300 billion is spent each year on health care that does not improve patient outcomes -- treatment that is unnecessary, inappropriate, inefficient, or ineffective.
- President announced in 2004 the goal of assuring that most Americans have electronic health records within the next 10 years. These electronic health records will be designed to share information privately and securely among health care providers when authorized by the patient.
- As the largest purchaser of health care -- in Medicare, Medicaid, the Health Centers program, the Federal Employee Health Benefits program, Veterans medical care, and programs in the Department of Defense -- the Federal Government is fostering the adoption of Health Information Technology and promoting adoption of Health Information Standards to allow medical information to be stored and shared electronically while maintaining privacy.

Need Help During Your Visit?
Call Dave Roberts (858-775-9241) or Tom Leary (571-331-2486).