

HIMSS Innovative Technologies & Policies Checklist

How States, Territories and Private Organizations Can Leverage Health IT Solutions During Natural Disasters

- **Build a model [State Health IT Plan](#)** that focuses on preparation for coordinated surveillance, detection, and response during health emergencies (a standalone plan or a part of a broader state health IT plan or emergency response plan) and policymaking relevant to health crises.
- **Create cross sector health data platforms** or open health data portals to collect data across the five domains based on Medicaid claims, environmental, public health surveillance data, emissions data, etc. This approach can be useful in creating targeted interventions, emergency response plans relating to the opioid crises, communicable diseases and other non-health data such as transportation to support health impact assessments that policymakers can leverage to make informed decisions during all hazards.
- **Utilize the Department of Homeland Security Fusion Model** to make available a set of protocols, methodologies and tools that support standards-based interoperability and information sharing during crises. [This approach](#) will allow community partners to leverage needed data sources that may not be currently available to them. The protocols may help healthcare leaders understand data ownership and data sharing policies before a crisis, which can prevent potential challenges retrieving data in the event of a crisis.
- **Encourage routine public health data submission** and query (wherever possible to require by law or policy) to enable a health IT infrastructure to be built and maintained, so resources are readily available in an emergency. Investments should continue in key initiatives, such as [electronic case reporting](#), which will enable cross-jurisdiction sharing of notifiable condition reports.
- **Incorporate key factors including laws, regulations, culture, policy, process and technology**, and formulate concepts for mitigation that deal with such issues as privacy, identity and privilege management, cybersecurity and a scalable model for improving interoperability. The [HIMSS Call to Action: Achieve Nationwide, Ubiquitous, Secure Electronic Exchange of Health Information](#) presents principles that health and human services agencies can employ to overcome barriers to exchange across the spectrum of care during public health emergencies.
- **Empower state policy leaders to provide critical analyses of the array of legal and policy areas** by leveraging the ONC guidance, [Connecting Public Health Information Systems and Health Information Exchange Organization; Lessons from the Field](#), which stresses the importance of developing consensus on policy issues and impediments to information sharing and of incorporating systematic monitoring and evaluation of health crises
- **Encourage the use of patient portals** as a means to address patient-level issues in a health emergency if individuals are evacuated to another community or in a shelter. This will support HHS agencies and providers with knowledge, medications, diagnoses and other patient needs if they are complete after moving patient data through possibly multiple exchanges.

- **Rethink social media strategies at the state level and use of mobile health technology to connect with vulnerable populations in crises.** In the event of crisis, public health agencies should make social media data available to healthcare agencies, community partners and the public so they can leverage platforms for connectivity (and to evaluate responses).