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February 16, 2017

The Honorable Tom Price, MD
Secretary
US Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Price:

Congratulations on your appointment to the position of Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. The EHR Association (EHRA) has been working with your office for several years on important health information technology (IT)-related initiatives, so we are reaching out to you to provide background on our association and our perspectives on issues that will carry forward into the new administration.

Established in 2004, the EHRA brings together companies that develop, market, and support electronic health records (EHRs) to collaborate on issues of importance to our companies and, notably, to our collective customers – hospitals, healthcare organizations, and clinicians – that represent the majority of EHR users in the US. We work together to speak with a unified voice on these topics in a non-competitive, collegial effort to understand, educate, and collaborate with all stakeholders engaged with EHRs and health IT.

The Association operates on the premise that the widespread adoption of EHRs is essential to improve the quality of patient care as well as the productivity and sustainability of the healthcare delivery and payment systems nationwide as a key enabler of the types of healthcare transformation that, in our view, have achieved wide bipartisan support. The EHRA and its members are committed to supporting safe healthcare delivery, fostering continued innovation, and operating with high integrity in the market for our users and their patients and families.

Our core objectives focus on collaborative efforts to accelerate standards-based adoption of EHRs and other health IT; to advance interoperability; and to improve the quality and efficiency of care through the use of these innovative technologies. We engage the EHR software developer community and other stakeholders regarding EHR and health IT standards development, EHR certification processes and criteria, interoperability, patient safety, EHR usability, privacy and security, electronic performance and quality measures (eQMs), health IT-focused public policy, and other EHR-related issues that are the subject of increasing government, payer, and provider focus.

It is important to emphasize that we place a priority on understanding and representing our users' perspectives based on our collective experiences in successfully implementing EHRs in organizations of virtually all sizes and specialties. We share their success stories as well as opportunities for improvement among our membership and more broadly to help ensure that the practical application and operation of EHRs is considered in national and local health IT initiatives.

The Association provides valuable input to Congress, policymakers, and regulators to bring this balanced perspective to the policy development and rulemaking processes, with the objective that resulting laws, policies and regulations are practical and meet shared goals to achieve meaningful use of EHRs to improve access, quality, and efficiency of healthcare delivery for all Americans. Moreover, the Association is actively engaged with organizations that represent providers, including hospitals, physicians, and other clinicians, to achieve a better understanding and open dialog about such critical topics as health IT adoption, EHR usability, patient safety, meaningful use, quality improvement, and other public and private programs focused on relevant topics.

In June 2013, the EHR Association introduced the [EHR Developer Code of Conduct](#). Because our members have a long tradition of working with their customers to improve care, increase efficiencies, enhance patient safety, and provide better outcomes, we concluded that the EHRA is best positioned to put forth these business guidelines for all EHR developer companies. By promoting the Code of Conduct, we underscore the importance to all stakeholders of transparent industry principles that reflect our continued commitment to our mission to represent all EHR developers and act as a responsible leader on behalf of our members. We encourage all EHR developers, regardless of membership in the EHR Association, to adopt the Code of Conduct.

Finally, the EHRA provides frequent testimony, comments, and education to legislators and policymakers, and has been called on increasingly to do so since its inception. We have ongoing and collaborative dialog with the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC), the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), the Health IT Policy and Standards Committees, and other federal agencies and committees.

We sincerely offer our expertise to you and your staff as you begin your important work to ensure that federal and state government and private sector investment in EHRs and health IT in general is achieving our shared goals of a more efficient, effective healthcare system for all Americans. Again, on behalf of the Association's member companies, we wish you great success in your new position.

We look forward to continued dialogue and successful collaboration with you and your staff in 2017. Representatives of the EHRA can be reached by contacting our Program Manager, Sarah Willis-Garcia, at swillis@himss.org.

Sincerely,



Sasha TerMaat
Chair, EHR Association
Epic

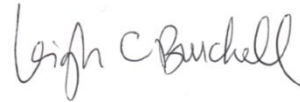


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About the EHR Association

Established in 2004, the Electronic Health Record (EHR) Association is comprised of over 30 companies that supply the vast majority of EHRs to physicians' practices and hospitals across the United States. The EHR Association operates on the premise that the rapid, widespread adoption of EHRs will help improve the quality of patient care as well as the productivity and sustainability of the healthcare system as a key enabler of healthcare transformation. The EHR Association and its members are committed to supporting safe healthcare delivery, fostering continued innovation, and operating with high integrity in the market for our users and their patients and families.

The EHR Association is a partner of HIMSS. For more information, visit www.ehrassociation.org.

CC:

Kate Goodrich, MD, Director, Centers for Clinical Standards and Quality, CMS
Jon White, MD, Acting National Coordinator, ONC