



September 9, 2009

Jonah Frohlich
Deputy Secretary of Health Information Technology
California Health and Human Services Agency

RE: California's Health Information Exchange Governance Entity

Mr. Frohlich:

The California Safety Net Coalition, a voluntary collaboration of 17 safety net provider organizations, would like to submit a letter to reaffirm our HIE principles and to ask the state to weigh the HIE Governance Entity proposals against the principles.

The CSNC formed during the summer of 2009 in response to the plethora of health information technology resources available and decisions associated with distributing those funds. The CSNC provides a unified voice for the safety net provider community on decisions and activities regarding the California State HIT Strategic Plan and the activities stemming from the Plan, including those outlined by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

California's health care safety net is an integral component of California's overall health care system. Because of the comprehensive and complex needs of our patient population the vast majority of our resources must be spent on patient care. This has resulted in limited HIT adoption in the health care safety net. However, now that resources are available and a statewide infrastructure is being built, it is imperative that our voices be heard and our concerns be addressed. In order that California realize a cost-savings from HIT investment the health care safety net must be fully supported and included in any plans relating to HIT. This is of utmost relevance in regards to the HIE Governance Entity the state is selecting.

We are in agreement with the state's vision of separating operation and governance, however we are not endorsing any applicant for the HIE Governance Entity. We feel that the principles we have outlined (attachment) provide the state with clear guidance on how to select a governance entity that will meet the needs of the health care safety net provider community. We are willing to provide counsel or further clarification on any of the principles outlined.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact our staff on the CSNC, Associate Director of Policy at the California Primary Care Association, Andie Martinez, at (916) 440-8170 or amartinez@cpc.org. Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

California Academy of Physician Assistants
California Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives
California Association of Physician Groups
California Association of Public Hospitals
California Association of Rural Health Clinics
California Association of Social Rehabilitation Agencies
California Chapter of the American College of Physicians Services
California Council of Community Mental Health Agencies
California Institute for Mental Health
California Medical Association
California Mental Health Directors Association
California Primary Care Association
California Rural Indian Health Board
California School Health Centers Association
California State Rural Health Association
Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California