



Health Care Access for All

September 8, 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:

On behalf of the California Primary Care Association (CPCA), the 18 regional health center associations and health center controlled networks, the 800 nonprofit community health centers, and the four million patients they serve in California, I would like to submit a letter to reaffirm our CPCA HIE principles, and to ask the state to weigh the HIE Governance Entity proposals against the principles.

California's community clinics and health centers (CCHCs) are 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 among the clinic networks. 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 CCHCs 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.

CPCA is supportive of the transparency and accountability measures built into the HIE Governance Entity. Specifically, we are supportive of the requirement for diverse board composition from multiple types of organizations from multiple regions throughout the state. It is clear that the state appreciates the variety of experience and expertise dispersed throughout California, both geographically and in the health care sector. We are also supportive of the requirement that there be a dispute resolution mechanism built into the organization. HIE, as the state clearly understands, is a political process that will inevitably create friction between players. Having mechanisms in place to ensure equity creates a foundation of fairness that will help to ensure success into the future.

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 California's CCHCs. 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 myself (ccastellano@cpc.org) or my staff, Robert Beaudry, COO (rbeaudry@cpc.org) or Andie Martinez, Associate Director of Policy (amartinez@cpc.org). Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Carmela Castellano-Garcia, Esq.
President & Chief Executive Officer
California Primary Care Association