



**Health Information Technology Council
Report to the Massachusetts Legislature**

Reporting Period: August 2017 to December 2017

Submitted in February 2018
by the Health Information Technology Council

Introduction

The Massachusetts legislature established The Health Information Technology Council (HIT Council) within the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) to coordinate and promote the development of a statewide health information exchange.¹

The Massachusetts Health Information Highway, also known as the Mass HIway, is the Commonwealth's statewide, state-sponsored health information exchange (HIE) and is operated by EOHHS. The Mass HIway is accessible to all eligible providers and healthcare organizations regardless of affiliation, location, or differences in technology. The Mass HIway serves as a tool for the Commonwealth's healthcare community to improve care coordination, health care quality, and public health reporting.

This *HIT Council Report to the Massachusetts Legislature* fulfills the statutory requirement for the HIT Council to file an annual report that: (a) describes the activities of the HIT Council; and (b) describes the progress made in developing the statewide health information exchange and recommending legislative action, if deemed appropriate.

This report provides an update on all activities related to the state's HIE that occurred between August 2017 and December 2017. This report follows the previous report, which covered 2016 and the 2017 activities through July 2017. A report covering calendar year 2018 is expected to be submitted to the legislature in early 2019.

Notable accomplishments and activities that occurred during August 2017 to December 2017 include:

Implementation of regulatory requirement to connect to the Mass HIway

In December 2017, the Mass HIway released paper versions of the Year 1 Attestation Form and Year 2 Attestation Form that will be used in 2018 by applicable Provider Organizations to describe how they meet the requirement to connect to the Mass HIway. The submission due date for these attestation forms is July 1, 2018.

As set forth in M.G.L. Chapter 118I section 7, and as detailed in the Mass HIway Regulations (101 CMR 20.00), health care providers in the Commonwealth are required to connect to the Mass HIway. This HIway connection requirement follows a four-year phased-in approach that progressively encourages use of the Mass HIway for Provider-to-Provider communications and bi-directional exchange of health information.

In 2018, Acute Care Hospitals are required to submit a Year 2 Attestation Form to the Mass HIway, and Large & Medium Medical Ambulatory Practices and Large Community Health Centers are required to submit a Year 1 Attestation Form. Online versions of the attestation forms are scheduled to be released in March 2018, which is expected to increase the efficiency of the attestation process for both provider organizations and the Mass HIway.

¹ The Massachusetts General Court initially established the HIT Council in 2008, and the Council was reorganized by Ch. 224 of the Acts of 2012, currently codified at M.G.L. c. 118I.

Outreach, Education and Account Management

There has been significant process on the HIway Adoption and Utilization Services (HAUS) Initiative in August to December 2017. The HAUS initiative (formerly known as the Deep Dive initiative) will be re-aligning its services in the spring of 2018 to support MassHealth's transition to alternative payment models.

- The goal of the initiative is to increase use of Direct Messaging for care coordination purposes and more closely align these services with the real drivers of change in the Health IT space – payment reform.
- Mass HIway is working closely with MassHealth to understand the health information exchange needs of its ACO participants, Behavioral Health and Long Term Services and Support Community Partners (CPs), and Community Service Agencies (CSAs).
- Services provided will include technical assessments, end-to-end management of health information exchange projects among multiple trading partners, workflow support, and overall change management.
- Mass HIway will develop a host of on-demand resources and events to support efforts to advance care coordination over the Mass HIway.

There is an ongoing procurement for a vendor to deliver Provider Consulting Services to the Mass HIway, including the HAUS initiative. The selected vendor will be announced in the first quarter of calendar year 2018.

Event Notification Service (ENS) Initiative

There has been significant progress related to EOHHS' ENS Initiative. The Request for Responses (RFR) for a vendor to assist EOHHS in this initiative is expected to be released in early 2018, with a soft launch of a state-wide Admission, Discharge & Transfer (ADT) Repository targeted for the first quarter of calendar year 2019.

EOHHS' ENS Initiative is expected to include the following project requirements of its forthcoming vendor:

1. Implementation of the following "core services":
 - Provide a centralized, statewide ADT Repository
 - Share ADTs with authorized ENS vendors
 - Provide and manage a centralized opt-in/opt-out mechanism
 - Maintain patient identification and matching capabilities
(Note: Producing ENS notifications is not included in the list of "core services", but may be implemented at EOHHS' discretion as an optional Phase 2 of the EOHHS ENS Initiative)
2. Provision of Subject Matter Expertise to help deliver the "core services" and to inform EOHHS's decision on whether to implement Phase 2 of the initiative and to authorize its vendor to produce ENS notifications.

Selection of Direct Gateway Vendor

EOHHS has selected Orion Health to implement and operate a new Mass HIway Direct Messaging System, also known as “HIway 2.0”. EOHHS and Orion Health executed a new contract effective January 1, 2018. HIway 2.0 will use Orion Health’s Communicate product, a SaaS solution. The Communicate solution meets the following key requirements sought by EOHHS in its procurement:

- Accredited by EHNAC for participation in DirectTrust
- Supports current standards, making it easier to connect to other systems
- Maintained with regular enhancement releases and product support
- Includes new features and improved functions that are easier to use

HIway 2.0 is scheduled to go live on April 1, 2018. All existing HIway Participants are expected to be migrated from HIway 1.0 to HIway 2.0 by January 1, 2019, and significant planning is underway to prepare for and support the migration process.