Strategies for the States and Military to Share Health Information

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Presentation Overview

- Texas Health Services Authority (THSA)
- Federal Health IT Policy
- Vision for Health IT – Where are we going?
- Why is health information exchange important?
- Overview of Challenges
- Strategies Discussion
THSA Organizational Background

Created in 2007 by the Texas Legislature through House Bill 1066

Public-private partnership, legally structured as a nonprofit corporation, to promote and coordinate the development of HIE in Texas

Governed by a 13-member Board of Directors appointed by the Governor with advice and consent of the Texas Senate
Several new health IT initiatives created and funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)

- Electronic health record incentives (estimated $36-$46 billion)
- Health information infrastructure ($2 billion)
- State grants for HIE planning and implementation
- Health IT regional extension centers
- Health IT workforce program
State Vision:

A healthcare system supported by a technological infrastructure made up of:

- Ubiquitous, interoperable, electronic health records composed of structured data elements; and

- A secure network to support the exchange of health information among providers.
Why is it important to share information?

Military Personnel and Veteran Population

- Large number of military and veteran benefit personnel – failure to connect to enable cross-sector health information exchange leaves out a significant part of our health care sector.

- Military presence. Major factor for Texas and other states.
  - Texas #1 in active duty military personnel in the country (with historic active installations like Fort Sam Houston, Fort Bliss, Fort Hood, Randolph AFB and Naval Air Station Corpus Christi);
  - Texas #2 in DoD civilian workforce.

Quality, Safety, and Efficiency

- Improve continuity of care and ensure providers have the right information at the right time.
  - Better care
  - Reduce duplicate tests
  - Avoid adverse drug interactions

- Increase patient access to health information and empower patients to better manage their personal care.
Overview of Challenges

- Technical interoperability challenges
  - Message (variations in message structure)
  - Vocabulary (values assigned to pieces of information)

- Process challenges
  - Patient matching
  - Erroneous results handling

- Operational challenges
  - Legacy systems
  - Timing

- Other
  - Sustainability
  - Privacy and security
  - Statewide connectivity
Strategies Discussion

- **Technical Interoperability**
  - Ensure state and community technical solutions are aligned with federal standard interoperability initiatives (i.e., Standards and Interoperability Framework and Nationwide Health Information Network Exchange Architecture and Specifications)

- **Process challenges**
  - Monitor progress through the Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER) that supports connectivity using NwHIN Exchange

- **Operational challenges**
  - Monitor VLER Communities Program
  - Ensure state health information architecture supports standards in line with federal standard interoperability initiatives

- **Other**
  - Monitor approach to implementation of statewide HIE
  - Ensure inclusive state and community-level governance that includes key stakeholders, including federal agency partners