

Maine Awarded \$6.6 Million Grant For Statewide HIT Plan

On February 12th, the State of Maine was awarded a \$6.6 million grant from federal stimulus funds to develop and implement a statewide health information technology plan. These funds are part of the HITECH Act and are the first stages of health care reform. The Federal Government is making funds available to states to facilitate and expand the secure, electronic movement and use of health information among organizations according to nationally recognized standards.

Maine will receive \$6,599,401 over four years to advance appropriate and secure health information exchange (HIE) across Maine's health care system. Two-thirds of the funds will be provided to expand the reach of Maine's HIE (HealthInfoNet) to primary care providers and hospitals in all areas of the state. This is a massive undertaking requiring a collaborative and coordinated effort. One third of the funds will be used to create and support a new Office of the State Coordinator (OSC).

The OSC will be created and temporarily positioned in the Governor's Office of Health Policy & Finance. A multi-stakeholder group was identified and convened by the Governor's Office of Health Policy & Finance (GOHPF). This committee has been brought together to collaboratively develop a statewide strategic plan for HIE and health Information Technology (HIT). Six sub-committees are being created to advise and oversee the health information exchange, the committees are: governance, finance and sustainability, technical infrastructure, business and technical operations, and legal/policy and quality improvement.

Maine's DRAFT HIT plan can be viewed at:

<http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/attach.php?id=85719&an=1>.