

## About the Health Information Technology Oversight Council (HITOC)

The Health Information Technology Oversight Council (HITOC) was created by the passage of HB 2009 within the Oregon Health Authority. The Council is comprised of eleven individuals appointed by the governor, and is charged with developing and implementing a statewide strategic plan for electronic health information exchange, coordinating public and private efforts to increase adoption of electronic health records, setting technology standards, ensuring privacy and security controls, and creating a sustainable business plan to support meaningful use of health information technology to lower costs and improve quality of care.

## [HITOC Member Photos & Bios](#)

## Upcoming HITOC Meetings:

Thursday, April 7, 2011  
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
Oregon State Library, Rooms  
102-103  
250 Winter St. NE  
Salem OR 97302

Thursday, May 5, 2011  
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
Oregon State Library, Rooms  
102-103  
250 Winter St NE  
Salem OR 97301

## HIE, Meaningful Use, Accountable Care Organizations The Big Topics at HIMSS National Meeting

The nation's biggest event for health information technology (HIT), the annual national HIMSS conference, took place in late February, with a contingent of Oregonians among the more than 30,000 attendees.

Conference halls were buzzing with talk about the meaningful use of electronic health records (EHRs), the [Direct project](#) for simple messaging of health data, provider directories, accountable care organizations, state innovation in HIT, and expanding use of mobile devices by physicians.

HIMSS (the [Health Information Management Systems Society](#)) attendees included Oregon's State Coordinator for Health IT Carol Robinson, Medicaid HIT Project Manager Susan Otter, HITOC consultant John Hall and HITOC Technology Workgroup chair Brian Ahier, who is Health IT Evangelist for Mid-Columbia Medical Center. They report that the conference was bigger than ever in attendance and vendor displays.

John Hall, a principal at KrySORA and a technical consultant to HITOC, reports that the biggest topic of conversation was providers' ability to meet Stage 1 meaningful use criteria that will allow them to receive federal EHR incentive payments. He also notes that the Direct project for messaging is gaining steam. "Every vendor has a Direct strategy," Hall says.

Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) were also a major topic of conversation, Ahier says, because of their central role in federal health-care reform's focus on quality and efficiency and also because IT is a major pillar in the ACO model of coordinated care. "The biggest takeaway from HIMSS is that the federal government has already made a significant investment in HIE and primed the pump," Ahier says. The transformation of health care is tech-enabled."

## Stage 2 Meaningful Use Proposal Draws Strong Opinions

Many health care providers [are telling the federal government](#) they will not be ready to implement the Stage 2 meaningful use objectives being proposed by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT. They are also concerned about the timing of the next stage of the incentive program for EHR adoption.

At the same time, though, a coalition of consumer groups and unions [have submitted comments](#) to ONC's Health IT Policy Committee arguing that the proposed criteria are reasonable and necessary to move HIT ahead.

A number of Oregon organizations submitted comments on Stage 2 meaningful use, including the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, Providence Health and Services, and Oregon Public Health Division. Their comments, along with those of the Statewide HIE Coalition, can be found in the [HITOC meeting materials](#) from its March 3 meeting.

## New Online Broadband Map Offers Data About Access Throughout the U.S.

A new searchable, interactive map of broadband access across the country is now online. The site had 158 million hits on Feb. 17, its first day online.

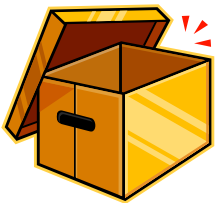
The [National Broadband Map](#) was created by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) in collaboration with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and in partnership with 50 states, five territories and the District of Columbia. It will be updated approximately every six months.

Website users can type in their locations and look up a wide variety of information about broadband access in particular geographic areas (including state, county, political district, etc.). It can also be searched for type of broadband technology, number of broadband providers, speed of transmission and other factors.

Kim Lamb, executive director of the [Oregon Health Network](#), lauds the website as a “great start to determining the availability of broadband nationwide to support a national broadband network deployment strategy, once defined.” But she cautions that the individual data points about Oregon within the website need context to be fully understood. “Until the data is expanded upon and confirmed, it should not be relied upon as a primary means to determine a community’s, industry’s or project’s needs,” Lamb says. “It is a starting point for state, regional and national projects to better coordinate shared broadband strategies, expansion and adoption objectives.”

### HITOC, MHIT staff moving to new offices April 1

In an effort to consolidate the work of HITOC and the Medicaid Health IT project, the staffs of both state teams will be moved together to shared office space in Salem on April 1.



Most phone numbers for HITOC and MHIT staff members will remain the same. For the most up-to-date information as the move takes place, check the [HITOC website](#).

### Joint Workgroup Confab Set for March 17

Three of HITOC’s subgroups will be meeting in a joint session on March 17 in Portland.

The HIO Executive Panel, Legal and Policy Workgroup and Technology Workgroup will meet from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The preliminary agenda includes break-out sessions that will allow panel and workgroup members to meet together by region to discuss local health information exchange issues. Among the topics for discussion are the potential ramifications of the health system transformation being discussed at the state level, which could make changes to the Medicaid system on a market-by-market level.

Also on the agenda are updates on HIE and the Direct messaging project, and how population health and data aggregation could be handled as part of HIE in Oregon.

The meeting will be at 3727 NE Martin Luther King Jr Blvd., in Portland.

#### Contact Information

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#### Recent Articles of Interest

- [“Accountable Care Organizations and Health Information Exchange,”](#) H&HN Online, Feb. 15
- New [Health Affairs issue](#) includes articles on EHR costs in primary care practices, how many office-based docs qualify for incentives, and medical homes
- [“Meaningful to the Community.”](#) Government Health IT article about Mid-Columbia Medical Center and HIE