



Oregon Community Health Integrated Data System (ORCHIDS) Project Overview

One million Oregonians, over a quarter of the State's population, are either on Medicaid or do not have health insurance. Oregon's Health Care Safety Net is the primary source of medical, dental, and behavioral health care for these patients. Yet the information we currently have about the Safety Net is fragmented and paints an incomplete picture of the needs of Safety Net patients and about the providers who care for these patients.

The primary goal of the ORCHIDS Project is to develop a safety net Knowledge Bank and portal to information on the Health Care Safety Net, along with the supporting organizational structure, that will:

1. Create a secure framework and tools to link disparate sources of data on Safety Net patients, including (but not limited to) Medicaid encounter data, hospital discharge data, primary care electronic medical record data, and primary care claims data.
2. Provide configurable, context-sensitive information about the Safety Net to policy makers, clinic administrators, health care and public health researchers, clinicians, and the public.
3. Encourage and support communications between and among the various Safety Net stakeholder communities.
4. Develop a digital library that will provide a framework for the organization and management of information about the Safety Net.

The project will focus its initial efforts on development in the Portland Metropolitan Area but will use this as a model for planned expansion to other regions of the State, leading eventually to a Statewide system of information on the Safety Net. The project will also look for opportunities to leverage the use of existing data sets to both provide meaningful data in a limited domain while designing an implementation model that will support the inclusion of additional data sources as they become available.

The community's ability to share information across systems, levels of care, and various users need not be compromised. There is a growing recognition of the need for collaborative action to improve the viability of information system solutions while also improving the ability to share information at the patient level and at the aggregate level. Embryonic discussion and partnerships are forming around this issue. Insurers, payers, managed care organizations, and providers, including safety net providers, are beginning to recognize common interest. The ORCHIDS Project will both increase affinity between these community partners and also assure better integration of the health care safety net into community information system solutions.

Oregon has done much to identify the need for data on the Safety Net, what is currently available, and the gaps in fulfilling that data need. Safety Net stakeholders throughout the State are currently joined in collaborative efforts such as the Oregon Community Health Information Network (OCHIN), the Tri-County Safety Net Enterprise (TSNE), and the Governor's Safety Net Advisory Council to find ways to improve both Safety Net data quality and reporting. As a broad collaboration of stakeholder organizations, the ORCHIDS Project is a timely response to the needs identified by the State and Oregon's Safety Net community.