HIMSS
OREGON Chapter

To: Carol Robinson
Administrator, Oregon Office of Health Information Technology
Oregon State Coordinator, Health Information Technology

From: Health Information Management and Systems Society, Oregon Chapter
PO Box 2314
Portland, OR 97208
http://www.himss-oregon.org/

Re: Oregon's Strategic Plan for Health IT

HIMSS Oregon appreciates the opportunity to comment on Oregon's Strategic Plan for Health IT. The pace and volume of change in healthcare both in Oregon and nationwide requires dynamic partnerships among diverse stakeholders. We appreciate the transparency and collaboration being offered as part of this strategic planning process, and want to offer any assistance now or in the future we can offer as the largest organization of healthcare information technology professionals.

Strategy 1) Establish financial support for critical health IT infrastructure through a Health IT Fund – HIMSS Oregon believes there is an important role for government in supporting communities of care that would not otherwise be able to obtain critical technology to support patient care or to help obtain essential infrastructure that would be impractical for any one organization to pursue individually. We think there is opportunity for efficiently supporting these kinds of efforts through existing organizations such as OHN and OCHIN/O-HITEC, and request that ensuring operational sustainability requiring minimal if any continued public support be of paramount concern both from a technical as well as fiscal perspective when selecting areas to invest.

Strategy 2) Advance the value of HIT for consumers –
HIMSS Oregon agrees engaging consumers on the potential of HIT is a critical aspect of the adoption of technologies to improve care. Patients asking poignant questions about what and how HIT is used to improve care, their experience as a customer, and reduce the costs they are increasingly bearing will be a significant driver of interest in solutions that have discernible benefit to them.

Strategy 3) Focus on interoperability as a key component to drive public and private HIT adoption – Supporting both sustainable standards and innovation are important as growth of information exchange continues in the state while recognizing Oregon's leadership in driving innovation in both Healthcare and Technology. We believe challenging our industry to advance information exchange into new areas is essential to the kinds of cost and quality improvements sought after as well as to satisfy continually, and justifiably increasing, expectations of consumers.

HIMSS
OREGON Chapter

Strategy 6) Extend technical assistance availability –
Bringing Healthcare IT stakeholders and professionals together is part of the core mission of HIMSS. HIMSS Oregon looks forward to the opportunity to assist in making connections among those that need assistance and those that can provide it. We also can provide forums for exchanging information and advice with peers as well as across industries and humbly offer our help in any way we can to move this strategy forward.

Strategy 8) Coordinate the efforts of all HIT-related initiatives in Oregon –
Our mission as a professional organization calls us to ensure our members are prepared for the future of HIT in our state. We enthusiastically support the transparency offered in the planning of HIT initiatives. Not only could this prevent redundant efforts but could help prevent different organizations from undertaking efforts that conflict unnecessarily. Our diverse membership of over 870 HIS professionals in Oregon is a tremendous resource to identify what is happening in the HIT community and help generate ideas for work that needs to be done at a strategic level as well as the challenges that slow needed innovation. HIMSS Oregon would like to offer any help we can to facilitate communication and collaboration in our state and with colleagues throughout the country that our national organization can help to enable. Recent and future planned events with the Washington HIMSS chapter show the potential to build new and stronger relationships among both public and private industry stakeholders at a regional level as well.

One area our organization noticed was not emphasized in the strategic plan was professional and workforce development. We believe these are topics that merit discussion and thoughtful planning. Not only are the technology landscapes of our industry evolving at a rapid pace requiring HIT professional to develop new skills, clinicians and providers in all roles increasingly need to interact with technology that continues to grow in complexity. This is occurring in an environment of increased regulation with concerns about their ability to absorb these changes and the potential risks these technologies bring from a liability and financial perspective. We believe there is a role for the OHA in encouraging skill development in our workforce to keep dollars and talent in our state, and we think there is need among healthcare professionals for knowledge of how best to use and integrate technology in their work. As one of the primary missions of HIMSS is professional development, we gladly offer any assistance we can provide to grow the capabilities of the healthcare and HIT workforce in our state.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide feedback. We look forward to addressing the opportunities and challenges the growth and advancement of HIT brings to our state and our industry.

About HIMSS Oregon: HIMSS Oregon is a professional organization that is dedicated to the development of healthcare information technology professionals throughout the state of Oregon. As a chapter of the national HIMSS organization, we connect our members with the latest developments in industry and technology. Through HIMSS, our members gain access to new tools, methods and technologies as well as HIMSS' professional development programs.