

Governor Asks HITOC to Provide Recommendations on Evaluation of Beacon Community Projects

The Beacon Community Funding Opportunity Announcement is a competitive grant opportunity through the ONC for approximately \$10-\$20 million dollar grants to be awarded to about 15 communities across the country for collaborative quality improvement projects, advanced through health information exchange. These will be highly competitive awards, and there is some excitement in Oregon about the possibility of capitalizing on our state's great progress in health reform, advanced adoption rates for EHRs and record of high quality health care delivery, to advance one or more applications. It is likely that multiple Beacon Community Applicants will be seeking state support for their proposals.

The Governor's Office has requested that HITOC develop a process to determine recommendations for the Governor's consideration on how the state should respond to Beacon Community Grant applicants' request for state support and partnership.

Since there are several inherent requirements for State support within the Beacon applications, as well as important considerations for State partnership opportunities associated with any application, the Governor's Office plans to consider recommendations from HITOC on the following questions:

1. Prior to supporting a Beacon Community proposal, should the State (the Governor, the State Medicaid Director, the Public Health Director, the State Coordinator, etc.) create a process for evaluating Beacon Community grant applications?
2. If it is determined that the State should set criteria for evaluating Beacon applications for support, what should the criteria be?
3. If there is an evaluation process and criteria, who should be on the evaluation panel?

HITOC Chair, Steve Gordon, is involved in discussions for a Beacon application and therefore has recused himself from all decisions pertaining to the Beacon Community Projects Funding Opportunity. Rick Howard, HITOC Vice-Chair has appointed HITOC members Bob Brown and Dave Widen to join him on this subcommittee. The sub-committee will meet within the next 10 days to discuss a response to the Governor's request, with the intent of presenting HITOC with draft recommendations by early January. HITOC is committed to a transparent, open process in all of its work, including this subcommittee and more information about timing and process will be available prior to the January HITOC meeting.