Health Information Exchange

Update to the Green Mountain Care Board

Jenney Samuelson, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Vermont Health Access
Maurine Gilbert, Community Quality Improvement Facilitator at the Vermont Blueprint for Health
Andrea De La Bruere, Director of Client Services, Vermont Information Technology Leaders

August 7, 2019

Opt-Out Consent Policy Implementation – Summary

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** DVHA in consultation with the HIE Steering Committee has engaged stakeholders to help define the messages, how and where people will receive information about consent
- **Mechanisms:** VITL is developing mechanisms for managing consent

- **Evaluation:** Plan for the evaluation is under development

Act 53 Implementation – Work Streams

Act 53 directs DVHA and the Health Information Exchange Steering Committee to administer a robust stakeholder process to develop an implementation strategy for the consent policy for sharing health information through the Vermont Health Information Exchange (VHIE)

- **Stakeholder Engagement**
  - Substantial opportunities for public input
  - Creation of patient education mechanisms and processes to align with HIPAA, address diverse needs, offer clear explanations
  - Enable patients to fully understand their rights regarding the sharing of their health information and provide them with ways to find answers to associated questions, including providing contact information for the Office of the Health Advocate
  - Include multisector communications strategies to inform each Vermonter about the VHIE, the consent policy, and their ability to opt-out
- **Mechanisms**
  - Identify mechanisms by which Vermonters can easily opt-out, and a timeline for these mechanisms
  - Develop consent management processes at the VHIE
- **Evaluation**
  - Identify a methodology for evaluating the extent to which the public outreach regarding the VHIE, consent policy, and opt-out processes has been successful

Reporting & Accountability

- Updates to GMCB and legislative committees
  - August 1, 2019
  - Nov 1, 2019
  - Jan 15, 2020
- Annual reporting - Health Information Exchange (HIE) Plan
- Opt-out consent policy implemented Mar 1, 2020

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder Engagement – Strategy Development

- Act 53 requires we communicate to each Vermonter
  - The purpose of the VHIE
  - The way in which health information is currently collected
  - How and with whom health information may be shared using the VHIE
  - The purpose for which health information may be shared using the VHIE
  - How to opt-out of having health information shared using the VHIE
  - How patients can change their participation status in the future
- The Stakeholder Engagement process is built to help us understand how and where to communicate the above clearly to all, plus
  - Build awareness
  - Get commitment from organizations to act as messengers

Stakeholder Engagement – Strategy Planning

June – Nov	Stakeholder engagement
Nov – Dec	Finalize messages and materials design Begin production
Dec – Jan	Roll-out to messengers – toolkit and training
Dec – Jan	Public communications begin via state and messengers
Feb	Intensify messaging in weeks immediately prior to March launch

Stakeholder Engagement Process

July	Interview advocates for the rights of all Vermonters	Complete
July	Identify special populations	Complete
July – Aug	Engage special population advocates to - Build awareness - Help gather interview/focus group participants - Ask them to be messengers	In-progress
July – Sept	Round 1 of interviews/focus groups with special populations and general public to understand - Communications needs – what they need to know to make an informed decision - Communications channels	In-progress
Oct – Nov	Round 2 of interviews/focus groups with special populations and general public to - Test messages - Test opt-out mechanisms / design future opt-out mechanisms	
Post March	Ongoing learning and optimization to improve clarity and reach of messages, ease of mechanism	

Who? Stakeholders Engaged

Population Identified	**Advocates Engaged**	**Member Interviews / Focus Groups**
People with developmental disabilities	✓	✓
Family members of people with developmental disabilities	Contacted	
Refugees and New Americans	✓	
People accessing sexual and reproductive health services	✓	
LGBTQ people	✓	
People living with HIV / AIDS	✓	✓
Teenagers / young adults	Contacted	
Older Vermonters	Contacted	
People receiving mental health services	Contacted	
People with substance use disorder	Contacted	
General public (“Vermonters”)	✓	✓

Mechanisms

Mechanisms and Consent Management

Execute the project to specifically focus on expanding opportunities for patient consent collection and provide mechanisms for Vermonters to easily opt out of having their health information shared through the VHIE.

- A VITL team has been assembled and meets on a weekly basis
- A project plan has been developed to address:
  - Policies and procedures
  - Use cases, workflows and security
  - Consent education materials
  - Maintaining continuity of previous consent decisions
  - Solution(s) design and documentation
  - Implementation

Evaluation

Evaluation Methodology

Identify a methodology for evaluating the extent to which the public outreach regarding the VHIE, consent policy, and opt-out processes has been successful

- 4 core evaluation questions
  - Have we reached people?
  - Is the message clear / understood?
  - Are the opt-out options easy?
  - Which providers are offering opt-out?
- Methods identified to date include Statewide Patient Experience Survey
- September - Ad-hoc eval committee including stakeholders will vet and propose methodology
- November - Full evaluation plan will be incorporated into the annual HIT Plan update, results included in VHIE evaluation reports to legislature and GMCB

Health Information Exchange Strategic Plan Alignment

- Health Information Exchange Strategic Plan update is due to the GMCB on November 1, 2019.