

# **2023 Update to the Health Information Exchange Strategic Plan & 2024 Connectivity Criteria**

Staff Review and Recommendations

Kate O'Neill

Director of Health Systems Data Analytics

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# Process Reminder



- **November 1:** AHS submitted HIE Plan and Connectivity Criteria to GMCB.
- **November 15:** AHS and VITL present HIE Plan and Connectivity Criteria; Board requests changes to HIE Plan.
- **November 30:** AHS resubmitted HIE Plan.
- **November 2 through December 4.** Special public comment period.
- **December 13:** Staff recommendation to GMCB on HIE Plan and Connectivity Criteria; potential Board votes.

# Staff Recommendations



1. Approve the HIE Strategic Plan 2023 Update as modified and re-submitted by AHS on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
2. Approve Connectivity Criteria for 2024, included in the HIE Strategic Plan 2023 Update as modified and re-submitted by AHS on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023

# GMCB Review Criteria for HIE Plan



Four criteria/questions were used by GMCB to review and analyze the Health Information Exchange Plan.

**1** Is the HIE Plan consistent with the HIT Plan requirements of 18 V.S.A. § 9351?

# HIT Plan Requirements in 18 V.S.A. § 9351



Support statewide use of electronic health information in patient care, health care policymaking, clinical research, health care financing, and continuous quality improvements	Addressed through goals and described in various sections of the Plan. ✓
Educate the general public and health care professionals about the value of an electronic health infrastructure for improving patient care	Addressed in governance strategy for 2024 to continue patient education and expand communications to provider community. ✓
Ensure the use of national standards for the development of an interoperable system	Plan is guided by standards, described throughout the document. ✓
Propose strategic investments in equipment and other infrastructure elements	Development of metrics addressed under funding strategy as a focus for 2024. ✓
Recommend funding mechanisms for the ongoing development and maintenance costs of a statewide health information system	Financial outlook described as “strong” with no additional recommendations. ✓
Incorporate the existing health care information technology initiatives to the extent feasible in order to avoid incompatible systems and duplicative efforts	Addressed through a number of activities related to Department of Health – HIE Integration. ✓
Integrate the information technology components of the Blueprint for Health, Master Patient Index, other Medicaid management information systems, and any other information technology initiatives	Plan addresses information technology initiatives in technology strategy such as provider directory and API capability. ✓
Address issues related to data ownership, governance, and confidentiality/security of patient information	Plan includes a governance strategy with details in Appendix G. ✓

## 2 Is the HIE Plan consistent with the Principles for Health Care Reform in 18 V.S.A. § 9371, and will it help achieve the State's health reform goals?

Yes. Plan broadly aligns in a variety of ways with the principles for health care reform.

VHIE goals support improvements in health care delivery, health outcomes, enriched health care data collection and analysis.

### 3 Is the HIE Plan consistent with other relevant legislation?

Yes.

Recommendations for Vermont Department of Health public health data and HIE integration will be developed, which will include collaborative prioritization, plans for implementation and appropriate data governance. While not all recommendations will be implemented in the upcoming year, AHS expects progress towards leveraging investments to bring public health into the unified health data space.

Recommendation for a more sustainable and patient focused approach to integrating timely claims data in the HIE includes work currently underway to integrate Medicaid claims data into the Unified Health Data Space with an interest in expansion to include Medicare and commercial payer claims data.

Sec. 4. Of Act 167 of 2022 requires:

- continuation of work to create one health record for each person.
- data integration strategy in 2023 HIE Strategic Plan to merge and consolidate claims data in the Vermont Health Care Uniform Reporting and Evaluation System (VHCURES) with the clinical data in the HIE.



## 4 Does the HIE Plan incorporate national best practices and expertise as well as feedback from Vermonters, including key HIE constituents (VITL, State of Vermont HIE stakeholders, and other private HIE providers), health care providers, and individuals?

Yes.

National Best Practice:

- Plans for building on previous work for interoperability such as through the Medicaid Data Aggregation and Access Program (MDAAP) related to connecting Medicaid providers with care coordination or referral tools, which will, in the future, be connected to the VHIE.
- National best practice around health data utilities focuses on interoperability with unified governance of health data, coordinated use standards and developing interoperability, around specific use cases –all of which are addressed in this Plan.
- The Connectivity Criteria is based on national standards and further defines data standards to meet the specific needs of Vermont data users.

Stakeholders:

- Stakeholders are now included in the HIE steering committee, data governance council and the data integration working group.

# Public Comment



- We did not receive any written public comment related to the 2023 update to the HIE Plan.

# Connectivity Criteria Review



Building on statutory requirements:

**1** Are the proposed Connectivity Criteria in alignment with HIE Plan goals, and will they support implementation of the HIE Plan and achievement of the State's health reform goals?

Yes. This year's Connectivity Criteria remain aligned with the HIE Plans goals and structure, and are designed to support increased availability of high-quality data.

**2** Are the proposed Connectivity Criteria sufficiently clear to be operationalized by VITL, the State of Vermont, and health care provider organizations?

Yes. These criteria were developed to expand providers' ability to submit and receive data from the VHIE.

# HIE Plan Requirements in Statute

**Health Information Exchange Strategic Plan (HIE Plan)**  
*previously known as the Health Information Technology (HIT) Plan*

18 V.S.A. § 9351(a):

“The Plan shall

- be revised annually and updated comprehensively every five years to provide a strategic vision for clinical health information technology.”
- include the implementation of an integrated electronic health information infrastructure for the sharing of electronic health information among health care facilities, health care professionals, public and private payers, and patients.”
- include standards and protocols designed to promote patient education, patient privacy, physician best practices, electronic connectivity to health care data, access to advance care planning documents, and, overall, a more efficient and less costly means of delivering quality health care in Vermont.”

# Connectivity Criteria Requirements in Statute

## Connectivity Criteria

- Under 18 V.S.A. § 9352(i)(2), Vermont Information Technology Leaders (VITL) must “establish criteria for creating or maintaining connectivity to the State’s health information exchange network” and provide those criteria to the Board by March 1 each year.

# GMCB Oversight of HIE



## 18 V.S.A. § 9351 (a)(2):

- The Board shall “approve, reject, or request modifications to the Plan within 45 days following its submission; if the Board has taken no action after 45 days, the Plan shall be deemed to have been approved.”

## 18 V.S.A. § 9375 (b)(2)(A):

- The Board shall “Review and approve Vermont’s statewide Health Information Technology Plan pursuant to section 9351 of this title to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place to enable the State to achieve the principles expressed in section 9371 of this title [Principles for Health Care Reform].”

## 18 V.S.A. § 9375 (b)(2)(B):

- The Board shall “Review and approve the criteria required for health care providers and health care facilities to create or maintain connectivity to the State’s health information exchange as set forth in section 9352 of this title. Within 90 days following this approval, the Board shall issue an order explaining its decision.”

# Suggested Vote



1. Approve the HIE Strategic Plan 2023 Update as modified and re-submitted by AHS on November 30th, 2023.
2. Approve Connectivity Criteria for 2024, included in the HIE Strategic Plan 2023 Update as modified and re-submitted by AHS on November 30th, 2023.