

May 9, 2016

The Honorable Sylvia M. Burwell
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Madam Secretary:

I am writing on behalf of the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Advisory Committee (CLIAC) to express the Committee's recommendation to advance a more connected, interoperable health information technology (IT) infrastructure.

BACKGROUND

Since 2012, CLIAC has provided three recommendations to HHS to improve laboratory data interoperability. The Committee firmly believes that laboratory data interoperability is essential to providing timely and accurate laboratory results that support patient-centered health care, reducing care delivery redundancy and costs, and real-time case reporting to enhance response by public health.

During the April 13-14, 2016 CLIAC meeting, the Committee was provided an update on laboratory interoperability and ONC policies and engagement with clinical laboratories. The Committee discussed the challenges and steps towards widespread exchange of laboratory data in electronic health records (EHRs). The majority of information found on EHRs emanates from laboratories. Representation of laboratories is thus essential for developing comprehensive national health information technology standards and policies. The Committee voted to provide the following recommendations to HHS and ONC.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) To facilitate wider uptake of standards for laboratory interoperability, HHS should endorse and stimulate adoption of an implementation guide/s for laboratory results reporting (e.g., The EHR-Lab Interoperability and Connectivity Specification (ELINCS) for orders available at: <http://www.chcf.org/projects/2009/elincs>); and successful pilots that arise from

the S&I framework effort

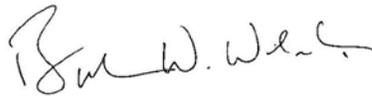
(<http://wiki.siframework.org/Laboratory+Orders+Interface+Initiative>)

2) CLIAC requests that the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) Standards and Policy Committees each include a pathology informatician (pathologist with expertise in clinical informatics) as a committee member.

CLIAC appreciates the significant and continuing efforts made by HHS and its operating divisions to develop a more connected, interoperable health IT infrastructure. Thank you for your consideration.

If you have any questions regarding CLIAC's recommendation, please feel free to contact me via email at burton.wilcke@med.uvm.edu or by telephone at 802-656-0525.

Sincerely,



Burton W. Wilcke, Jr., Ph.D.

Chairperson

Clinical Laboratory Improvement Advisory Committee (CLIAC)

cc:

Dr. Thomas Frieden

Director, CDC

Dr. William R. Mac Kenzie CLIAC Designated Federal Official

Deputy Director for Science, Center for Surveillance, Epidemiology, and Laboratory Services

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