



July 20, 2012

Farzad Mostashari, MD, ScM
National Coordinator for Health Information Technology
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Dr. Mostashari:

The Coalition for Physician Accountability, comprised of leaders of national, non-profit organizations involved in the assessment, licensure, certification, credentialing and regulation of the medical profession, share your commitment to improving the quality of health care in the United States by enhancing and expanding the utilization of health information technology (HIT) throughout the medical community. We would like to invite you to speak at one of our upcoming meetings so that we may initiate a discussion with you as to the opportunities and challenges we collectively face as the implementation of meaningful use and other HIT policies advance across the United States.

The advancement of HIT continues to demonstrate its ability to transform our nation's health care system, increasing access to quality and efficient care, especially for patients in rural or underserved communities. The adoption of HIT policies, particularly those pertaining to electronic health records (EHR), also allows for greater coordination in health care, thereby sufficiently reducing the rate of medical errors and the costs associated with unnecessary and/or redundant medical procedures.

Individually and collectively, our membership shares the responsibility to properly train, educate, assess, support and promote lifelong learning for the U.S. physician workforce. In this capacity, we recognize the need to incorporate HIT training in undergraduate, graduate and continuing medical education settings, and seek to develop appropriate curricula. Moreover, the medical regulatory community has placed a significant emphasis on demonstrated competency and lifelong learning as components of Maintenance of Certification (MOC)/Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) and Maintenance of Licensure (MOL). Self-assessment and practice self-assessment as they relate to the implementation and utilization of meaningful use can serve as performance measures for both quantity and quality in the delivery of care.

Despite the promises and possibilities associated with HIT, we also share concerns regarding its impact on the medical profession and, most importantly, on patient safety. There remains significant uncertainty as to the lack of standards and interoperability for electronic health records, as well as defining what constitutes a complete and legal EHR. Questions surrounding the assurance of patient privacy and the secure storage and exchange of electronic information remain unanswered. As such, it is imperative that these matters be addressed expediently and prior to the next stages of meaningful use implementation.

Our organizations have individually served on various governmental workgroups and taskforces and we stand united in our eagerness to partner with the Office of the National Coordinator and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to implement HIT programs and initiatives pursuant to The HITECH Act. We have yet to witness HIT at its full potential but are confident that we can collaboratively develop, enhance, and sustain the nation's interoperable electronic health information network.

The Coalition for Physician Accountability is eager to continue the dialogue with you as to the advancement and implementation of HIT policies across the United States. Please contact me at hchaudhry@fsmb.org, and we would be pleased to work with your staff to schedule the meeting pending your availability.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Humayun J. Chaudhry, D.O., FACP
President and CEO
Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB)

Organizational Members

- Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME)
- Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)
- American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)
- American Medical Association (AMA)
- American Osteopathic Association (AOA)
- Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
- Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)
- Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB)
- National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME)
- National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME)

Liaison Members

- Council of Medical Specialty Societies (CMSS)
- The Joint Commission