

New HIT standards committee kicks off with tight deadlines

May 15, 2009 | Diana Manos, Senior Editor

WASHINGTON – The Health IT Standards Committee, created under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and headed by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, kicked off Friday with its first meeting.

Federal officials and panel members said the tasks before it and its twin committee on policy have a steep challenge ahead to meet deadlines established under the new law. The committees must have an initial set of standards completed by Dec. 31. Recommendations on "meaningful use" - required by providers for bonuses under Medicare - are due within a month or so.

David Blumenthal, national coordinator for health information technology and chairman of the policy committee, said the committees will be looking to the Bush Administration Standards Harmonization committee of the Healthcare Information Technology Standards Panel (HITSP) as a good place to start. Blumenthal said the work to be accomplished by the policy committee has not been "overly prescribed" under ARRA's directives and it will be "a work in progress."

HITSP chair John Halamka is co-chair of the new standards committee, which will receive recommendations from the policy committee. Halamka said the standards committee should proactively anticipate the policy committee's work in order to meet deadlines.

According to Halamka, the four elements likely to be included in 'meaningful use' are electronic prescribing, laboratory reporting, clinical summaries for care coordination and quality data. Halamka said he believes the standards work under ARRA will be more available to the public and will consider the needs of physicians and how they are able to apply the standards as part of the initial process.

Blumenthal also announced the other members of the Health IT Policy committee. HHS appointees are: Michael J. Klag and Deven C. McGraw. Other committee members are:

- **David Bates**, Brigham and Women's Hospital
- **Christine Bechtel**, National Partnership for Women & Families
- **Neil Calman**, The Institute for Family Health
- **Richard Chapman**, Kindred Healthcare
- **Adam Clark**, Lance Armstrong Foundation
- **Arthur Davidson**, Denver Public Health Department
- **Connie White Delaney**, University of Minnesota/School of Nursing
- **Paul Egerman**, Businessman/Entrepreneur

- **Judith Faulkner**, Epic Systems Corporation
- **Gayle Harrell**, Florida State Legislator
- **Charles Kennedy**, WellPoint, Inc.
- **Michael Klag**, Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health
- **David Lansky**, Pacific Business Group on Health
- **Deven McGraw**, Center for Democracy & Technology
- **Frank Nemeč**, Gastroenterology Associates, Inc.
- **Marc Probst**, Intermountain Healthcare
- **Latanya Sweeney**, Carnegie Mellon University
- **Paul Tang**, Palo Alto Medical Foundation
- **Scott White**, 1199 SEIU Training and Employment Fund