



5/5/25 WEDI FEDERAL UPDATE

OCR Settles HIPAA Ransomware Cybersecurity Investigation with Neurology Practice. The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) [announced](#) a settlement with a small New York neurology practice following a potential violation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Security Rule. The settlement resolves the investigation of a ransomware attack reported by the practice in December 2020. The attack involved the encryption and lack of access to the practice's network affecting 6,800 individuals' electronic protected health information (ePHI), including patient names, clinical information, health insurance information, demographic information, Social Security numbers, driver's license numbers, and state identification numbers. OCR's investigation found that the practice failed to conduct an accurate and thorough risk analysis to identify the potential risks and vulnerabilities to the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of its ePHI. Under the terms of the settlement, the practice will implement a corrective action plan, be monitored by OCR for two years, and pay a fine of \$25,000. This settlement marks OCR's twelfth ransomware enforcement action and eighth enforcement action in its Risk Analysis Initiative. Go [here](#) to access the resolution agreement and corrective action plan.

Bipartisan Senate Bill Aims to Improve Access to Care in Rural Areas through RPM.

U.S. Senators Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) and Mark Warner (D-VA) introduced a bill titled the ["Rural Patient Monitoring Access Act"](#) to improve access to remote physiologic monitoring (RPM) for Medicare patients in rural and underserved communities. The bill highlights the need to expand RPM services in rural areas due to its support of highly coordinated care, improved patient outcomes, and potential to lower costs to the Medicare program. Currently, Medicare reimbursement for RPM is lowest in states where heart failure, hypertension, and diabetes are above the national average. Increasing access to RPM services addresses typical challenges faced by people living in rural areas, including shortages of qualified health care professionals and transportation issues. U.S. House of Representatives David Kustoff (R-TN), Mark Pocan (D-WI), Troy Balderson (R-OH), and Don Davis (D-NC) introduced a similar [bill](#) in the House.

HL7 Da Vinci Prior Authorization HIPAA Exception Project Report Published in the Federal Register.

The Health Level Seven (HL7) International Da Vinci Project (Da Vinci) HIPAA Exceptions Project Report was published in the [Federal Register](#). The report, released earlier this year, details the testing of three HL7 FHIR implementation guides – Coverage Requirements

Discovery (CRD), Documentation Templates and Rules (DTR), and Prior Authorization Support (PAS). The purpose of the project was to test the feasibility of the HL7 FHIR standards for conducting prior authorization functions. The report concludes that using the HL7 FHIR standards significantly improved the current prior authorization workflow.

Members of House Ways and Means Committee Call on CMMI to Focus on Costs and Quality.

The House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee recently sent a [letter](#) to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Administrator Oz Center and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) Director Sutton expressing interest in work being done by CMMI. The letter urges CMMI to focus its work on promoting value, achieving program savings, increasing transparency, and incorporating public input to improve model development, implementation, and evaluation. CMMI was created by the Affordable Care Act for the purpose of developing and testing value-based care through innovative care delivery and payment models. The goal of these models is to improve care quality and reduce costs in Medicare, Medicaid, and other government health insurance programs.

CMS Seeking Feedback on QPP Submission Experience for PY2024. CMS is looking for feedback from participants of the Quality Payment Program (QPP) about their experiences with submitting data for the Performance Year (PY) 2024. CMS intends to use data from the survey to identify how the submission process is working and improvements to make it better. Responses will be de-identified so that no individual, group, or entity can be identified. The survey is available [here](#).

NIST and NTIS Call for Nominees for Federal Advisory Committees. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) released a notice in the [Federal Register](#) calling for nominations to ten existing Federal Advisory Committees, including the Board of Overseers of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award; Information Security and Privacy Advisory Board; Judges Panel of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award; National Artificial Intelligence Advisory Committee; National Technical Information Service Advisory Board; and Visiting Committee on Advanced Technology. Nominations for all Committees will be accepted on an ongoing basis and will be considered when vacancies arise.

Health IT End-Users Alliance Issues Consensus Statement on AI. The Health IT End-Users Alliance (HITEU Alliance) issued a [Consensus Statement](#) outlining the need for common principles that ensure “thoughtful oversight and governance frameworks to minimize risks and ensure the appropriate, safe, and ethical use of AI.” Interest in the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in health care has exploded as organizations look for solutions to decrease administrative burden and improve patient care delivery. The Consensus Statement is a call for action that highlights the need for regulation and oversight on how AI is employed in care delivery;

transparency and trust in how AI tools are developed and operated; inclusion of end-users throughout AI development and use; and appropriate controls for privacy and security of patient data.

Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week is May 5 - 11, 2025. Help spread the word about Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week and the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) [National Maternal Mental Health Hotline](#) (1-833-TLC-MAMA). The hotline is a free and confidential service offering 24/7 support via call or text to new and expecting moms and their loved ones. Find promotional items for the hotline [here](#).