

WEDI Submits Comments to HHS on Cybersecurity NPRM. WEDI submitted a formal response to the publication in the January 6, 2025, edition of the *Federal Register* of a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) entitled “HIPAA Security Rule to Strengthen the Cybersecurity of Electronic Protected Health Information” released by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office for Civil Rights (OCR). WEDI emphasized the need for the Department to ensure the final rule strikes the appropriate balance between mandating achievable requirements that improve cyber hygiene while not imposing undue administrative burden. Special thanks to the Co-Chairs of the WEDI Privacy and Security Workgroup, Lesley Berkeyheiser (Direct Trust) and Thanh-Thien Nguyen (Kaiser Permanente), and the facilitators and participants at the WEDI Member Position Advisory event for their input and recommendations. Read the comment letter [here](#).

OCR Imposes a \$200,000 CMP Against University for Failure to Provide Timely Access to Patient Records. OCR announced a \$200,000 civil monetary penalty (CMP) against an Oregon university for violating an individual’s right to timely access to medical records through a personal representative. OCR initiated an investigation of the university based on a complaint filed in January 2021 from the individual’s personal representative – the second complaint OCR received on this matter. In September 2020, OCR resolved the first complaint (received in May 2020) when OCR notified the university of its potential noncompliance with the Privacy Rule Right of Access provisions. Although the university provided part of the requested records in April 2019, it did not provide all the requested records until August 2021, which was nearly a year after it received OCR’s September 2020 letter, and sixteen months after the first request for records in April 2019. OCR’s investigation found that the university failed to take timely action in response to the right of access requests.

In September 2024, OCR issued a Notice of Proposed Determination seeking to impose a \$200,000 CMP. The university waived its right to a hearing and did not contest OCR’s imposition of a CMP. Accordingly, in December 2024, OCR finalized its determination and imposed the CMP. Go [here](#) to access the Notice of Final Determination.

Steve Posnack Named Acting Assistant Secretary/National Coordinator. Steve Posnack has been [named](#) Acting Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy (ASTP) and Acting National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC). For more than 20 years Posnack has served in various positions at ASTP (formerly ONC). In these roles, he will lead the execution of ASTP’s mission and represents its interests at a national and international level. Steve oversees ASTP’s federal policy coordination, regulatory development, public-private initiatives, and the HHS-wide functions led by HHS’ Chief Technology Officer, Chief Data Officer, and Chief Artificial Intelligence Officer. The Assistant Secretary/National Coordinator is not a position requiring Senate confirmation. The current HHS Secretary, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., is expected to name an individual for the position.

NSF Releases RFI on AI Action Plan. The National Science Foundation (NSF) [issued](#) a Request for Information (RFI) seeking public comment on developing the Administration’s Artificial Intelligence (AI) Action Plan. The AI Action Plan intends to “sustain and enhance America’s AI dominance” and seeks to avoid burdensome

requirements that could “hinder private sector AI innovation.” The plan address various AI policy topics, including hardware, data centers, cybersecurity, data privacy, national security, and more. Comments are due March 15.

Coalition Sends Letter Urging Telehealth Extensions. A [letter](#) signed by close to 350 organizations urged Congressional leadership to take action in March to establish permanent or long-term access to telehealth. The letter, organized by the Alliance for Connected Care, was sent to Senate Majority Leader Thune, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Johnson, and House Minority Leader Jeffries. The coalition contended that ensuring stability for telehealth policy would: (i) Provide certainty for Medicare beneficiaries (and the Medicare program), who will otherwise wonder if they will have continued access to clinicians and services they are using virtually; (ii) Strengthen our national health care workforce by enabling greater number of clinicians to provide telehealth services and allowing for investment in flexible virtual staffing models that address current workforce shortages while maintaining high quality health care; (iii) Encourage ongoing investment in the technology tools and infrastructure to offer telehealth services, particularly for smaller providers serving rural and underserved communities – who cannot afford to invest in these tools without an ensured reimbursement pathway; and (iv) Allow health plans and employers to design and offer benefits leveraging telehealth services – particularly for high-deductible health plans offering discounted telehealth services.

WEDI on Panel Discussing CAQH Index. CAQH will hold a webinar on Wednesday, March 12 from 2:00 - 3:00 PM ET to discuss the 14th annual [Index Report](#). The Index Report reveals a \$20 billion opportunity to reduce administrative waste, ease provider burden, and improve patient access to care. Along with the WEDI Executive Director, the webinar will feature speakers representing patients, providers, and health plans. The panel will review the current state of electronic transaction adoption and discuss opportunities for automation and interoperability in health care administration. Register [here](#) for the free webinar.

Civitas Call for Speaking Proposals Closes March 19. Those seeking to speak at the Civitas Networks for Health 2025 Annual Conference in Anaheim, CA., Sept. 28 - 30, 2025 are reminded that the call for speaker proposals closes March 19. Submitters are encouraged to submit proposals that highlight the conference theme — *Bridging Data and Doing* — and fall within one of the three conference tracks: (i) Interoperability, national networks, standards, and technology; (ii) Promising partnerships; and (iii) Community information exchange. Those that did not attend the Call for Proposals Information Session, please check out the [slide presentation](#), [recording](#), and [submission criteria](#). Go [here](#) to learn more about the conference and access the proposal submission portal.