

March 11, 2025

The Honorable Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
United States Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201

Re: Welcome and Introduction to the Friends of ASTP

The Honorable Secretary Kennedy:

The Friends of ASTP would like to welcome you to the Department of Health and Human Services. The Friends of ASTP is a coalition of organizations that support the [Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy/Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology](#) (herein referred to as ASTP). The Friends of ASTP comprises numerous organizations committed to enabling better health through data. Our membership spans the health and health care continuum including health care providers, health IT developers, and health informatics experts.

In the February 13, 2025, Executive Order “Establishing the Presidents Make America Healthy Again Commission,” it is stated that we must increase transparency regarding existing data for clinical trials and expert guidelines, and we could not agree more. Given ASTP’s role in securing American health data and streamlining access to large data sets, ASTP is integral to this goal. Additionally, ASTP will be integral in advancing the Commission’s goal to reduce the incidence of chronic diseases by evolving the nation’s interoperable ecosystem of electronic health records (EHRs) and efficiently capturing, transferring, and analyzing information from devices and wearables that are necessary to empower patients’ management of existing chronic conditions and avoiding developing additional ones.

ASTP has been at the forefront of the nation’s health IT efforts since 2009 when it was mandated by statute in the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH Act). For more than a decade ASTP has supported the development of a dynamic and robust market for health IT products and services, helping to convene experts and establish policies that have improved the interoperability and usability of a wide range of tools, including EHRs.

The HITECH Act also charged the agency with coordinating a nationwide effort to implement the most advanced health IT by building an interoperable, private, and secure nationwide health information network and supporting the widespread, meaningful use of health IT. ASTP conducts critical work to: advance interoperability and information exchange; coordinate digital health transformation in partnership with federal, state, and private sector stakeholders; support the modernization of the US public health data infrastructure; empower patients and clinicians with the most advanced IT capabilities; and successfully fulfill the many statutory requirements of the HITECH Act.

In recognition of the HITECH Act requirements for the HHS Secretary to adopt standards and coordinate health IT strategy across the Department, ONC was reorganized as ASTP to streamline and centralize health technology, health data, and health artificial intelligence (AI) strategy across HHS. This important reorganization recognizes essential efficiency efforts to combine similar

functions in the private sector and reflects the fundamental ways technology, data, and AI are integrated and should be managed across various HHS agencies and offices.

As the highest ranking official responsible for the nation's health, we ask you to:

1. Continue long-standing bi-partisan support for health IT and health data policy through ASTP by naming an Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy / National Coordinator for Health IT as soon as possible.
2. Emphasize a need for federal convening and coordination through ASTP to support private sector-led health AI development, deployment, and use.
3. Meet with industry leaders at the Friends of ASTP to learn more about how ASTP supports our organization's missions, members, and the Americans we serve.

Our organizations fully support ASTP's mission to support the nation's appropriate and safe use of technology, data, and AI to advance the health and well-being of the American people. Thank you for your time and attention. Please reach out to Reva Singh (rsingh@amia.org) with questions and we look forward to scheduling a meeting with your office and appropriate members of your team.

Sincerely,

Academy Health
American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA)
Center for Telehealth and e-Health Law
Duke University
EMI Advisors LLC
HLN Consulting LLC
Innovation Center for Biomedical Informatics, Georgetown University Medical Center
Learning Health Community
Manijeh Berenji MD Consulting Inc
MD Partners, Inc.
Namaste Informatics, LLC
NCA Consulting, LLC
Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medical Association
Society of General Internal Medicine
Washington University in St. Louis, Institute for Informatics, Data Science, and Biostatistics
Wolters Kluwer, Health Language