

### CALL TO ACTION: SUPPORT THE ASTP

- Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy (ASTP) is formerly known as Office of the National Coordinator of Health Information Technology (ONC).
- ASTP has been at the forefront of the nation's health IT efforts since it was statutorily mandated by the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH Act) (2009).
  - Securing American health data
  - Streamlining access to large data sets
- ASTP will be integral to the Make American Healthy Again (MAHA) commission.
  - Evolving the nation's interoperable ecosystem of EHRs and efficiently capturing, transferring, and analyzing information from devices and wearables to empower patients' management of existing chronic conditions and avoid developing new ones.
- **ASTP must be fully funded and staffed to continue its track record of success and support the administration's policies.**

#### ASTP Successes

[Insert personal stories on one of these topics . The points below provide background. They are not to recite as a running list of facts, but to provide substance to your stories. How would losing ASTP's projects affect your work?]

- *EHR Adoption:* In 2004, EHR adoption was less than 10% and by 2014 over 95% of hospitals and over 75% of ambulatory physicians had adopted ONC-certified health IT systems. **This is an enormous success, as widespread EHR use allows us to collect, chronical, and aggregate health data to better understand the population and the illnesses affecting us.**
- *Interoperability:* The 2021 Cures Act Final Rule set requirements for critical open-industry data and interoperability standards in certified EHR systems. USCDI is the minimum standardized dataset of the healthcare system.
  - **US hospitals experienced widespread progress toward interoperability with 70% of hospitals reporting that they 'sometimes' or 'often' engaged in all four domains (electronically finding, sending, receiving, and integrating patient health information) in 2023, up from 23% in 2014.**
  - The 21st Century Cure Act directed ASTP to support development of a nationwide "network-of-networks" to connect existing and future networks using common nationwide policies and technical standards, much like private, independent, cell phone networks connect today allowing consumers to communicate with each other regardless of which network service or device they choose. Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement (TEFCA) was then created.
    - The TEFCA "electronic phonebook" directory currently includes 15,000 clinical entities live for exchange including 700+ hospitals, 10,000+ physician offices, 50+ mental health centers, 400+ post-acute long-term care facilities,

40+ public health agencies, and almost 200,000 individual clinicians. Over the past year, these organizations have securely exchanged over 200 million searches for patient information to support clinical care, including almost 50 million searches in October 2024 alone.

- *Health Data, Technology, and Interoperability (HTI)*: Certification program to support the access, exchange, and use of electronic health information and improve algorithm transparency, which aims to promote responsible use of AI and other predictive algorithms in certified health IT. **This is hugely important to ensure AI tools are trained and used appropriately as AI's impact on our health and healthcare continues to grow.**
  - Key points:
    - Transparency Requirements: establishes first-of-its-kind transparency requirements for AI and predictive algorithms used in certified health IT. This means that clinical users will have access to a consistent, baseline set of information about the algorithms they use. This information will help them assess the algorithms for fairness, appropriateness, validity, effectiveness, and safety.
    - Baseline Information: ensures that clinical users can access essential information about the algorithms, such as their intended use, the data they were trained on, and any potential biases. This transparency is crucial for making informed decisions and ensuring that the algorithms are used responsibly.
    - Promoting Responsible AI: aims to promote the responsible use of AI in healthcare. It encourages developers to create algorithms that are not only effective but also fair and safe for all patients.
    - Supporting Decision Making: The transparency requirements help clinical users understand how the algorithms work and how they can be integrated into their decision-making processes. This understanding is vital for ensuring that the algorithms are used effectively and safely in clinical settings.
    - Regulatory Approach: represents a leading-edge regulatory approach by HHS. It sets a precedent for other industries and regulatory bodies to follow in promoting transparency and responsible AI use.
- **ASTP must be provided resources to continue its important mandate. Support the ASTP.**