The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) is transforming the health care system in Oregon by improving the lifelong health of Oregonians, increasing the quality, reliability, and availability of care for all Oregonians, and lowering or containing the cost of care so it's affordable to everyone.

Health information technology (IT) is key to health transformation efforts and affects almost everyone. There are hundreds of health care organizations across Oregon that need to make decisions about health IT. Their decisions affect thousands of health care providers and other health care workers, and millions of people in Oregon.

To ensure that health system transformation efforts are supported by health IT, the Oregon legislature created the Health Information Technology Oversight Council (HITOC). HITOC is a committee of the Oregon Health Policy Board (OHPB) which sets policy and provides oversight for OHA. HITOC aligns their work with OHA's strategic goal of eliminating health inequities by the year 2030.

HITOC brings partners across Oregon together for centralized policy work, strategic planning, oversight of health IT efforts, and landscape/policy assessment, so health IT efforts are more coordinated. HITOC provides health IT expertise to OHBP and to Oregon lawmakers so they are informed about health IT in Oregon when they make policies and laws about health.

HITOC members are appointed by OHPB. HITOC members must have expertise in health care delivery, health IT, health informatics, or health care quality improvement. They must also be representative of the people of Oregon and organizations that are affected by OHA's health IT efforts.

What is Health Information Technology (IT)?

"Health IT" is technology (computer hardware or software) that stores, retrieves, shares, or uses health information.

"Health information" includes patient records of doctors' visits, hospital admissions, prescriptions, lab results, etc.

Examples of health IT include:

- Tools that store and display the health information a health care provider has about a patient, for example, electronic health records and patient portals.

- Tools that share health information from one health care organization to another, for example, from a primary care provider to a specialist.

- Tools that help health care organizations analyze and improve the health care they provide.

- Wearables and apps that patients use as part of managing their health.

Health information is private and protected by law. Health IT must protect patient privacy and ensure security.

Health care providers, private health plans (health insurance companies), Medicaid Coordinated Care Organizations, health systems, hospitals, clinics, and other health-related organizations use health IT to take care of patients and manage their businesses.

Patients, families, and caregivers use health IT to view their health information, communicate with their health care providers, and manage health conditions.

HITOC's Responsibilities (ORS 413.308)

Explore Health IT Policy	Explore high-priority health IT policy topics related to Oregon's goals of health system transformation and promoting health equity; when appropriate, convene workgroups to aid exploration.
Plan Oregon's Health IT Strategy	Make recommendations to OHPB about health IT policy, including health IT strategic planning, priority setting, policy direction, legislative opportunities, developing statewide health IT programs and partnerships, and other opportunities to improve the effectiveness of health IT efforts in Oregon.
Oversee OHA's Health IT Efforts	Oversee and monitor OHA's health IT efforts, including the Oregon Health IT Program, and promote transparency about those efforts. The Oregon Health IT Program has a variety of initiatives, including bringing federal funding to Oregon to support providers and community-based organizations in purchasing and using health IT tools.
Assess Oregon's Health IT Landscape	Assess the state of health IT in Oregon; identify gaps, barriers, areas where more information is needed, and other issues with health IT in Oregon.
Report on Oregon's Health IT Progress	Develop reports to inform OHPB and other partners about use of health IT in Oregon, including electronic health record adoption and use, participation in health IT efforts, and other topics important to achieving Oregon's goals for health IT-optimized health care.
Monitor Federal Health IT Law and Policy	Monitor federal health IT laws and policies that impact Oregon; make recommendations to OHPB, the Oregon Congressional Delegation, or take other action when appropriate.

Stay Connected

You can find information about HITOC on the HITOC website. Meetings are open to the public and public comments are accepted at the end of each meeting or in writing to the HITOC Chair and Vice-Chair in care of OHA (HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov).

Get involved with Oregon Health IT

Office of Health Information Technology & Analytics Infrastructure: HealthIT.Oregon.gov

Program Contact: HITOC.INFO@odhsoha.oregon.gov

Click here to join the listserv

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