

May 12, 2023

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Baldwin, Ranking Member Capito, Chair Aderholt, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

Thank you for your leadership and bipartisan dedication to supporting our nation's healthcare system transformation journey. As we continue our work to advance information sharing and interoperability capabilities, **the undersigned organizations urge you to fully fund the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) at the President's proposed FY24 budget request of \$103.6 million.** ONC has long served as the key partner to public and private sector stakeholders to advance the health information and technology ecosystem. This \$37 million increase in funding would provide ONC with the necessary resources to help achieve nationwide, standards-based health information exchange.

Since 2004, ONC has largely operated at the same annual funding levels despite being entrusted by Congress with new authorities and responsibilities through legislation, including the HITECH Act, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act, and MACRA. The passage of the HITECH Act of 2009, which propelled our nation's healthcare system into the 21st Century, rapidly accelerated our ability to exchange healthcare records and data to support healthcare delivery and improve patient outcomes. Throughout this ongoing transformation, ONC has been a convener for health IT activities across federal agencies, states, and healthcare sector stakeholders, supporting a wide array of initiatives aimed at advancing national goals for better, safer, and more equitable healthcare through a nationwide interoperable health IT infrastructure.<sup>1</sup>

We believe that fully funding ONC will allow it to continue its critical work to advance interoperability and information exchange, coordinate federal and state-level digital health transformation, support the modernization of the U.S. public health data infrastructure, empower patients and clinicians with the most advanced information and technology capabilities, and successfully fulfill the many requirements outlined in the lengthening number of laws enacted since 2004 (i.e., MIPPA, HITECH, MACRA, 21<sup>st</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.healthit.gov/sites/default/files/page/2022-03/ONC%20FY%202023%20CJ.pdf>

Century Cures, etc.). Without the much-needed funding boost, we fear that ONC will be hard-pressed to successfully execute the many agency initiatives, and priorities of Congress and the Administration.

ONC further plays a leading role in creating a culture of learning around information sharing to ensure that health data is flowing across the entire ecosystem in support of the goals of the 21st Century Cures Act. We appreciate ONC convening and supporting the stakeholder community on implementation of the information blocking regulations as the healthcare sector continues to forge a pathway for ubiquitous sharing of patient information and enabling patient's facile access to their data. Going forward, ONC will be an even more critical enabler of our health system transformation, including serving as the technical advisor across HHS on implementing information sharing and ensuring that patients, providers, developers, networks, insurers, and other stakeholders truly benefit from the new rules. Moreover, implementing these regulations positions the health ecosystem to leverage robust data sharing that will accelerate necessary advances in public health, patient empowerment, health equity, population health, and medical research.

Our organizations fully support ONC's mission to promote the adoption of health IT and use of health information to enhance the health and well-being of every American, and we thank you for your consideration of this important funding request. If you have any questions, please contact David Gray at [david.gray@himss.org](mailto:david.gray@himss.org).

Sincerely,

ADVault, Inc.  
ADVION (NASL)  
Akanimo Cancer Foundation  
Akron Children's  
Alliance for Nursing Informatics  
American Board of Quality Assurance & Utilization Review Physicians, Inc.  
American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)  
American Heart Association  
American Medical Informatics Association  
American Organization for Nursing Leadership  
Association of Public Health Laboratories  
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials  
Big Cities Health Coalition  
Carequality  
Civitas Networks for Health  
College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME)  
Connected Health Initiative  
Consortium for State and Regional Interoperability (CSRI)  
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists  
District Medical Group  
eHealth Exchange  
EMI Advisors LLC  
Executives for Health Innovation (EHI)

Grady Health System  
Health Gorilla  
Health Wallet  
Healthcare Leadership Council  
HIMSS  
HIMSS National Capital Area Chapter  
HIMSS Austin Chapter  
HIMSS Colorado Chapter  
HIMSS Michigan Chapter  
HIMSS Midwest Gateway Chapter  
HIMSS Oregon Chapter  
HIMSS Puerto Rico Chapter  
HIMSS Wisconsin Chapter  
Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise USA (IHE USA)  
Intermountain Health  
IT Consulting Group LLC  
Leavitt School of Health, Western Governors University  
Mayo Clinic  
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services  
Michigan Health Information Network Shared Services  
NAPHSIS  
National Health IT Collaborative for the Underserved (NHIT)  
OCHIN  
Orchid Healthcare Solutions  
PointClickCare  
Southeast Michigan Health Information Exchange (SEMHIE)  
Strategic Informatics Solutions  
Superlanet Inc  
TECHMEDO  
The Sequoia Project  
Upper Peninsula Health Information Exchange (UPHIE)  
Velatura Public Benefit Corporation  
Women's Digital Health  
Zen Healthcare IT