



# HITSP

Healthcare Information Technology Standards Panel

a webinar series on U.S. healthcare interoperability



## Steve's Story\* . . . part three

*"Steve" is a 26-year-old male coping with the long-term effects of a brain tumor that was removed during his childhood. He continues to face issues regarding the availability and usability of his medical information during follow-up and emergency care.*



Given my medical history, I've had a lot of doctors. When I was younger it wasn't so bad – I saw a pediatric neurosurgeon and a pediatric neurologist, and that was usually it. By the time my headaches returned when I was in college I was too old to see pediatric doctors. I had to start seeing a bunch of specialists, including a new neurosurgeon and a new neurologist. It was pretty intimidating.



Each doctor always had lots of questions about my medications and my surgical history. Over the course of two years I had four craniotomies, plus all the related referrals and tests. It's hard to keep track of all the different doctors, let alone the dates and details of a specific appointment.



What I'd really like is a way to keep track of every appointment . . . who I saw, what was done, and how the tests turned out. It would also be great to have a way to plan for upcoming appointments or tests. I try to keep track of everything on my calendar, but it's tough keeping everything in order. Some of these new appointments and tests are hard to get – so the last thing I want to have to worry about is missing one of them.



And then let's not forget about the forms. At every new visit, over and over, the same thing: tell them about my – and my family's – medical history. Give them insurance information. List which doctors have seen me before – and how they can be reached. Spell out dates and details of tests, treatments, and surgeries. Tell them what medications I'm on now, what I've tried in the past, and what I'm allergic to.



For the past couple of years I've been keeping a diary of when I start to feel sick, what I was doing at the time, and how long it lasted. I'm really careful about recording when I get headaches and my reactions to medication – even vitamins and other over-the-counter stuff that I take. I've also started writing down what I eat and how I exercise. If the doctors could look at this information, maybe they could spot some trends or make advancements in my treatment.

I'd love to have a way of collecting all that information in one place and letting the doctors have access to it.



*\*based on a true story*

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Steve's story is not happy, and it is not uncommon. Poor communications between and among doctors, labs, pharmacies, insurance companies and other providers cause many patients to suffer from fragmented care that is detrimental to their health.

### Healthcare in an Interoperable World

In an interoperable world, Steve's health-related information will be available electronically and can be exchanged securely and seamlessly between and among diverse systems.

His Personal Health Record (PHR) will conform to nationally recognized interoperability specifications established by the Healthcare Information Technology Standards Panel (HITSP). His healthcare-related data will be drawn from multiple sources — care and insurance providers, labs, pharmacies, and more — making it easier for both Steve and his doctors to see the progression of his condition.

Steve will establish permissions and manage access rights for viewing his data, ensuring that his doctors will be able to see the information — but no one else can. He and his healthcare providers will be able to retrieve and store lists of current and previous health conditions, current and past medications, allergies (to medications, medical supplies and food), test results, medical procedures and environmental factors.

Steve will be able to annotate his PHR, adding his own observations and supplying further information to his healthcare providers — including details that he may not be able to recall at each appointment.

And, with a list of diagnosis codes, results, conditions, and allergies in layman's terms, Steve will also be able to review and understand his medical record, making him better prepared to discuss his condition with each of his doctors.

### HITSP: Enabling Healthcare Interoperability

The Healthcare Information Technology Standards Panel (HITSP) is a national, volunteer-driven, consensus-based organization that is working to ensure the interoperability of electronic health records in the United States.

A cooperative partnership between the public and private sectors, HITSP identifies and selects the necessary functional components and standards to enable the interoperable exchange of healthcare data. HITSP also documents any gaps in standards which must be resolved. The Panel then develops guidance documents known as Interoperability Specifications (IS) that recommend the standards that will meet clinical and business needs for sharing information across organizations and systems. Once an IS is recognized by HHS Secretary Michael Leavitt, agencies administering or sponsoring federal health programs are required to implement the standards.

Operating under contract to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), HITSP is sponsored by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) in cooperation with strategic partners the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS), the Advanced Technology Institute (ATI), and Booz Allen Hamilton.

Nearly 400 organizations representing consumers, health care providers, public health agencies, government agencies, standards developing organizations, and other stakeholders now participate in the HITSP and its committees.



**More Information**

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