

NCVHS Accomplishments in FY 2010

- 1) Approved a letter on implementation of updated versions of the HIPAA transaction standards and ICD-10 code sets (March 2010), based on a hearing organized by the Standards Subcommittee on the “Industry Preparations for the Updated HIPAA Standards and Code Sets.” Federal, state and business representatives described their strategies, processes, and status of preparedness for the updated code sets and transactions. The letter includes observations and recommendations to encourage consistent and timely implementation.
- 2) Through the Standards Subcommittee, held hearings July 19-21 on the Unique National Health Plan Identifier and Operating Rules for electronic exchange of information, each covering a full day. Letters with recommendations are being prepared for each. Working closely with CMS, the Committee organized the series of hearings and is developing the recommendations to meet the aggressive deadlines identified in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). The intent of the law is to reduce complexity and costs in health care claims processing, provider collections and reimbursement through increased standardization of common health care transactions (i.e. claims, eligibility, etc). NCVHS was charged with this crucial assignment because of trust in the Committee’s effectiveness, fairness, and deliberative process
- 3) Submitted its Ninth Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Administrative Simplification Provisions of HIPAA.
- 4) Approved a letter (September 2009) on “Protection of Privacy and Security of Individual Health Information in the Personal Health Records” which provides an overview of the impact of Health IT in the domain of personal health records, and insight obtained from early federal demonstration projects. The letter served as a foundation and frame of reference for other NCVHS reports and letters throughout the year.
- 5) Co-sponsored a special conference, “Privacy Law and Ethics Meet Biomedical Informatics,” held at the University of Utah School of Law, one of numerous events celebrating the NCVHS 60th Anniversary. The conference was well-attended by stakeholders in health information technology and healthcare information. The Executive Secretary offered opening remarks, NCVHS members and staff participated throughout, and the former Chair of the NCVHS Privacy Subcommittee, spoke about sequestering genetic information in the EHR.
- 6) Organized and participated in a session of the NCHS National Conference on Health Statistics on “Building Information Capacities for Enhancing Population Health and Health Care: A View From NCVHS (August 2010). Co-chairs from the NCVHS Population Health and Privacy, Confidentiality and Security Subcommittees offered perspectives on the Committee’s strategic framework and initiative for building information capacities to enhance population health and health care, maximizing the potential of electronic health information to improve clinical care, with clear and comprehensive policies on privacy, confidentiality and security. The session highlighted the partnership between NCVHS and NCHS (celebrating 50 years), and the Committee’s strategic vision.

- 7) Approved a report (September 2009) subsequently printed as a *Primer on Health Data Stewardship*, which clarifies the concepts, principles and practices associated with ensuring the knowledgeable and appropriate use of data derived from individuals' personal health information. The published report has been a valuable resource, available and accessible to medical institutions and training organizations because it addresses basic concepts of responsible use, consideration, and treatment of health statistics and data.
- 8) The Committee accepted the background paper on Revisiting Health Statistics for the 21st Century, which stratified and prioritized recommendations from the 2002 NCVHS report, "Shaping a Health Statistics Vision for the 21st Century" as part of the Phase I efforts to revisit the Vision. The background paved the way for the next stage of "repositioning" health statistics to utilize and maximize the dynamics of health care reform.
- 9) Through the Quality Subcommittee, conducted a hearing on "The Meaningful Measure Supply Chain – Building Measures that Matter for Our Nation's Health and Healthcare Priorities." Presenters and testifiers covered aspects of building meaningful measures, recognizing the impact of new data sources and the continuing evolution of e-health, EHRs and user-generated data. Participants provided insight about how "meaningful measures" of quality are created, introduced to the field, adopted and sustained, including how measures are selected in national priority areas.
- 10) Approved the resultant letter "Meaningful Measurement of Quality Health Care using Electronic Health Records", which recommends increased coordination of national quality and performance measurement, establishing a Quality and Performance Reporting Specifications Library, and aligning EHR certification with quality reporting requirements. Aggressive coordination between data systems at the onset is necessary to lay the ground work for successful EHR utilization. The letter reflects the cross-cutting nature of the Subcommittee's work with the development, use, and effectiveness of quality measures.
- 11) Was briefed by the Executive Director of the Federal Coordinating Council for Comparative Effectiveness on the status and general operations of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)'s plans. Comparative effectiveness information is essential for clinicians and patients to decide on the best treatment and is intended to improve the health of communities and the performance of the health system (November 2009).
- 12) Was briefed by the NCVHS Executive Staff Director about the newly assigned Chief Information Officer to improve DHHS data systems access and coordination, status of health information technology funding plans, and early positive results of community health prevention pilot studies on health behaviors.
- 13) Through the Populations Subcommittee, conducted a conference call meeting on "Meeting Information Needs for Health and Health care," (February 2010 Blizzard required changes, but the key participants still communicated.) Leaders for three subgroups presented the issues in terms of Measurement, Provider data, and Quality of Care. The session explored health information technology (IT) potential in developing the health information infrastructure, noting the importance of multiple information sources to provide a rich information base, and the role of surveys to "fill some gaps."

- 14) Was briefed by Dr. Bilheimer on the Community Health Initiative, a major new public-private effort to help Americans understand health and health care performance, which also significantly aligns with major NCVHS objectives. The intention of the initiative is to enhance understanding of health and health care system performance in communities, and facilitate action to improve performance and value. Initiated and conducted at NCHS, the Initiative already has Department-wide support serving as prototype flagship for “Open Government.”
- 15) As part of the 60th Anniversary Symposium at the National Academy of Sciences (June 17) that celebrated the Committee’s accomplishments, the Committee presented its “concept paper”—Toward Enhanced Information Capacities for Health. The document provided a high-level conceptual framework of the Committee’s priorities and vision. With its focus on accessibility and availability of information, standards for interoperability, usability, quality, safety and efficiency, as well as privacy, confidentiality and security, the paper also launched the subcommittee overviews and future plans.
- 16) Updated the 50-year History of the NCVHS (“The National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics: Sixty Years of Making a Difference – a History”), which will be included in the 60th Anniversary Symposium Report.
- 17) Conducted “A Colloquium of Former NCVHS Chairs” at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, VA (September 2009) to record the Chairs’ ideas about the Committee’s longevity, current and constantly evolving electronic and web-based information environment, and Committee dynamics. Oral histories and a roundtable discussion were taped and edited into videos that include the chairs’ reflections about health data and statistics as well as the need to balance electronic information advancement with a sustained focus on population health. The participants all noted the role of former chairman, Dr. Kerr White, whose book collection and professional materials are included in the Don Detmer wing of the medical library at the medical center. The video was shown during the 60th Anniversary Symposium, where the former Chairs also offered remarks.
- 18) Co-sponsored with NCHS the 15th North American Collaborating Center Conference on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) at the NIH Natcher Center (June 2010) in recognition of the Committee’s critical role during this decade in promoting collection of data on functioning in clinical and statistical records and the use of ICF as the standard to accomplish this.
- 19) The NCVHS Executive Leadership meets periodically in conference calls and in “retreat” for appropriate strategic planning, review of processes and operations to assure the Committee’s effectiveness. The liaison representative to the NCHS Board of Scientific Counselors has been an active participant and engaged in the Center’s program review efforts and activities. The NCVHS Leadership also coordinates with the Office of the National Coordinator and its two HIT Advisory Committees to assure complementary and synergistic work products. The Committee continues to reinforce its commitment to help “prepare the landscape for data-driven reform,” and develop an Information Framework for Health and Health Care Improvement.