Health Information Technology Advisory Committee

U.S. Core Data for Interoperability Task Force 2021 Virtual Meeting

Meeting Notes | August 17, 2021, 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. ET

Executive Summary

The focus of the U.S. Core Data for Interoperability Task Force 2021 (USCDI TF 2021) was to continue to work on its Task 3 recommendations in advance of their presentation to the HITAC on September 9, 2021.

There were no public comments submitted by phone, but there was a discussion in the chat feature in Adobe Connect.

Agenda

10:30 a.m.	Call to Order/Roll Call
10:35 a.m.	Past Meeting Notes
10:40 a.m.	Task 3 Recommendations
11:00 a.m.	Draft Task Force Recommendations Report to the HITAC
11:50 a.m.	TF Scheduled Meetings
11:55 a.m.	Public Comment
12:00 p.m.	Adjourn

Call to Order

Michelle Murray, Acting Designated Federal Officer, Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC), called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m.

Roll Call

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Steven Lane, Sutter Health, Co-Chair
Ricky Bloomfield, Apple
Hans Buitendijk, Cerner
Grace Cordovano, Enlightening Results
Ken Kawamoto, University of Utah Health
John Kilbourne, Department of Veterans Health Affairs
Clem McDonald, National Library of Medicine
Mark Savage, Savage Consulting
Sheryl Turney, Anthem, Inc.
Daniel Vreeman, RTI International
Denise Webb, Indiana Hemophilia and Thrombosis Center

MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Leslie Kelly Hall, Engaging Patient Strategy, Co-Chair

Jim Jirjis, HCA Healthcare
Les Lenert, Medical University of South Carolina
Aaron Miri, University of Texas at Austin, Dell Medical School and UT Health Austin
Brett Oliver, Baptist Health
Michelle Schreiber, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
Abby Sears, OCHIN
Sasha TerMaat, Epic
Andrew Truscott, Accenture

ONC STAFF

Michelle Murray, Senior Health Policy Analyst, Policy Coordination Branch, Strategic Planning and
    Coordination Division, Office of Policy (ONC); Acting Designated Federal Officer
Matthew Rahn, Deputy Director, Standards Division, ONC

General Themes

TOPIC: TASK 3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The USCDI TF members discussed its Task 3 recommendations.

TOPIC: DRAFT TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT TO THE HITAC

USCDI TF members will have an opportunity to view the draft USCDI TF Recommendations Report during offline work and will work to finalize the document at the next meeting.

Key Specific Points of Discussion

TOPIC: USCDI TF 2021 HOUSEKEEPING

The USCDI TF 2021 co-chair, Steven Lane, welcomed TF members and members of the public to the meeting, briefly reviewed the agenda, and highlighted the following housekeeping items:

- USCDI TF 2021 meeting materials, past meeting summaries, presentations, audio recordings, and final transcriptions are posted on the website dedicated to the TF located at https://www.healthit.gov/hitac/committees/us-core-data-interoperability-task-force-2021
- The TF will continue to meet most weeks on Tuesdays at the same time to discuss Phase 3 of its work in preparation for its presentation to the HITAC on September 9, 2021.
- The submission cycle for comments on the draft of Version 3 of the USCDI (USCDI v3) is underway.

TOPIC: TASK 3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Steven reviewed the fact that the USCDI TF submitted its Phase 1 and Phase 2 recommendations to the HITAC, and the HITAC voted to transmit them to the National Coordinator for Health IT. Now, the TF is focusing on Phase
3, which entails developing recommended ONC priorities for the USCDI Version 3 (USCDI v3) submission cycle. These recommendations will be presented to the HITAC on September 9, 2021. Work on draft USCDI v3 recommendations includes a focus on items that have been designated as Level 2 in the ONC New Data Element and Class (ONDEC) Submission System, as well as other items at lower levels or that are being submitted in the USCDI v3 cycle.

Steven displayed the draft USCDI TF Phase 3 Recommendations working document and asked TF members to review the draft as a shared Google document. He explained that Al Taylor of ONC has been working on the document in between meetings and that recommendations and comments have been transferred from the other TF working/shared documents.

The TF discussed the draft recommendations.

DISCUSSION:

- Steven summarized a comment David McCallie, co-chair of the Interoperability Standards Advisory Task Force (ISP TF), left on the USCDI TF Phase 3, Recommendation 1. He stated that the requirement for advancement for Level 2 should be exchange between two (2) health information technology (HIT) vendors, instead of exchange between four (4) vendors.
  - o TF members agreed to keep this change in the wording.

- Steven explained that he used text from Al Taylor and comments made by Dan Vreeman to update the USCDI TF Phase 3, Recommendation 2. He provided significant clarification to the text of the recommendation and asked TF members to review the updates.
  - o Dan Vreeman voiced his support for the recommendation and thanked Steven for extracting the high-level points into more detailed bullets. He stated that this recommendation is more actionable, as it has been expanded and clarified.
  - o Clem McDonald stated that the recommendation is too abstract for the general population to grasp and referenced a previous iteration of this recommendation. He urged Dan to reexamine the text and emphasized the need for clarity.
  - o Dan responded that some of the comparisons Clem requested, specifically further details relating data classes and data elements to tables/Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR), would be added back to the recommendation for greater clarity. Dan offered to update the text in the working document.
  - o Hans Buitendijk supported the recommendation and asked that the intent of the third bullet be clarified. Dan will also submit updated text there.

- Steven reviewed USCDI TF Phase 3, Recommendation 3 and asked TF members to comment.
  - o Ricky Bloomfield commented that the term "data sets" needs to be clarified, and Steven agreed. TF members discussed wording options, and they decided to change it to "value sets." They also discussed the terms "vendor-neutral" and "exemplar," in addition to various wording options. Steven suggested removing "vendor-neutral."
  - o Matt Rahn of ONC and TF members discussed the need for the USCDI to be neutral in terms of standards, and Steven summarized previous discussions around whether the TF should include examples within the recommendations to provide greater clarity (not to be prescriptive).
    - ▪ Hans Buitendijk explained that if the TF includes exemplars, it could set an expectation that the examples included would need to be used. He stated that the TF could tie its recommendations to the ISA to avoid potential confusion, but if exemplars are used, the TF must be clear that they are not required. Steven agreed that links between relevant parts of the ISA and USCDI websites could be included on each.
    - ▪ Clem commented that the ISA has been too unstable over time to be used/linked in the manner described. He suggested that it has been updated beyond a previous version and is missing items that were present previously. Hans responded that the ISA is meant to be like a library of standards that is updated regularly. He stated that previous versions of the ISA are also viewable.
    - ▪ Matt explained that the intention is that what is in the ISA includes current standards, future/upcoming items, and represents different maturity levels via identifiers. He asked Clem to send any comments/feedback on the ISA to him directly for further assessment.

- Steven reviewed USCDI TF Phase 3, Recommendation 4, and asked TF members to comment.
    - Clem McDonald has put together a list of 20-25 the most commonly exchanged non-laboratory non-imaging clinical tests that may never become individual elements within the USCDI. This included tonometry, EKGs, etc. Clem will provide the list of specific clinical tests and associated structure (e.g., LOINC codes) for inclusion as part of the recommendation.
    - Mark Savage offered to provide a list of example SDOH Assessments. He commented that the Gravity Project has worked to be agnostic to any particular assessment tool, but he cautioned that not all items in the list would be agnostic.
    - The TF discussed the language of the recommendation, and Steven updated the recommendation in the working document. They strove for clarity and brevity so that the TF would be able to clearly explain its recommendations to the HITAC in the future.
    - Hans Buitendijk asked that "be included within" be changed to "support the data class," and the TF discussed this wordsmithing suggestion. Steven referenced a previous TF discussion in which data classes were referred to as the "containers" for specific data items. Hans asked if the standards to support the USCDI will also include syntactical and structural standards, as well as vocabulary standards. He explained how standards like FHIR US Core would be referenced as being outside or supporting the USCDI, but they would not be "inside" it.
    - Steven added a new bullet to explain that lists of specific items that belong or could be contained within a data class or element could reside in the ISA in the future. Hans explained that certification definitions should not be contradictory to the USCDI, and he offered to add a new comment to the document to be used for another recommendation.
- Steven reviewed USCDI TF Phase 3, Recommendation 5, and asked TF members to comment.
    - TF members did not change the recommendation.
- Steven reviewed USCDI TF Phase 3, Recommendation 6, which included a long, diverse list of national imperatives and use cases which have been identified as priorities in TF discussions, and asked TF members to comment.
    - Clem McDonald commented that more categorization was needed within the list.
    - Hans Buitendijk stated that having the list in the recommendations emphasizes examples of the types of data the TF would like to support for interoperability, but he added that they cannot assume that everyone will support everything in the list.
    - Steven asked for clarification around "Robust API/app ecosystem (constrained by available data)"
        - Mark Savage explained that items that are not available within the USCDI define how apps are developed and, in this way, they create their own use cases. The absence of these elements/classes has an impact.
        - Hans suggested moving this point to Recommendation 5, as it is cross-cutting across all the other items in the list.
        - Clem commented that the recommendation is that systems cover these use cases but not that all users be required to collect/document the relevant data.
        - Hans explained that some data might not be included because it is not being collected for one reason or another, though it is possible to collect it. Mark explained that creating the structure for each data element is the first step, and then there should be no mandate for users to collect, but the recommendation would provide a signal that the data should be entered when available.
- Steven reviewed USCDI TF Phase 3, Recommendations under the Data Needs Related to Public Health Use Cases section (Recommendations 7 through 15). He suggested that many of the recommendations could have been included in the Public Health Data Systems Task Force (PHDS TF) Recommendations. He stated that these might not be within the TF's scope for its Phase 3 work, so they could be pulled into a separate set of recommendations to the HITAC.

- o Mark Savage commented on the importance of these recommendations and asked that they be left in the TF's Recommendations and Report documents.
- o TF members agreed to leave Recommendations 7 through 12 in the report, while Hans suggested pulling Recommendation 13 out (Develop a certification program for public health IT systems as a companion to existing clinical HIT certification), as it does not specifically apply to the USCDI and public health/is out of scope for the current charge.
  - ▪ Steven agreed that there are a number of examples where a full certification system that would allow interoperability beyond the clinical domain would be helpful. Hans suggested options to reword the recommendation, with public health included as an example with a more general statement. This was included as a result of the PHDS TF's recommendations and work.
  - ▪ Hans will suggest language generalizing the recommendation to the need to validate non-certified systems that share USCDI data.
- o TF members agreed that Recommendations 14 and 15 are outside of scope and should be moved to a separate section of supplementary recommendations that are not specific to the TF's Task 3 or removed. These came from the recommendations of the PHDS TF. Hans stated that Recommendation 15 is already included under a previous recommendation, and Mark added that these two recommendations could be flagged within an introductory statement in the other Report document.
- Steven reviewed the Improve Stakeholder Engagement section, which included Recommendations 16 through 18. He stated that these recommendations are important but noted that they are not applicable to the USCDI or the TF's current charge.
  - o Mark Savage commented that these recommendations will encourage people to think ahead of current events and to highlight important work.
  - o Hans commented there are two considerations: the USCDI does not encompass all electronic health information (EHI), and FHIR Bulk Data will likely play a role in the exchange of data outside the USCDI but has not been designated officially for this purpose. The TF should recognize that the role of the USCDI is to have standards to exchange EHI.
  - o Steven asked if Recommendation 17 is more specific to the USCDI than the first, and Hans suggested blending #16 and #17. Mark suggested that the recommendations were different enough to keep them separate.
  - o Steven suggested that Recommendation 16 be pulled into the separate set of supplementary recommendations, and they will leave 17.
- Steven reviewed some of the comments and recommendations from the older TF working documents around the high-priority data classes and elements. These included:
  - o Recommend that all clinical note types be included in USCDI v3.
    - ▪ Steven, Hans, and Clem discussed whether all types were already included in the recently published USCDI V2 and which should be suggested first (i.e., the shorter list of the 13 that are specifically identified in C-CDA versus adding all of the 700+ note types specified in LOINC). Clem asked the TF not to be stingy with what is included.
    - ▪ Mark and Dan supported recommending the inclusion of all of the clinical note types specified in LOINC as a common vocabulary instead of the open fields in C-CDA.
    - ▪ Hans suggested clarifying minimum expectations for structure/guidance and what is included if C-CDA is used. This would help to organize different types of Clinical Notes, while still allowing free text.
    - ▪ The TF discussed wording, and Steven invited TF members to submit comments/feedback during offline work.
- Mark Savage discussed comments he left under several of the earlier recommendations and invited TF members to decide if they should be carried over from the earlier working documents to the current set of recommendations.

o Should a mention of providing timelines for development of write-access APIs specific to USCDI data classes and elements be added? Timelines would allow the user community to plan ahead for necessary updates.

- Steven suggested that this is a more general recommendation that is not specific to the USCDI. However, he captured the feedback within the working document.
- Clem supported this recommendation but highlighted potential difficulties for vendors.

o Mark explained that he drafted an introductory piece for the Public Health Recommendations following conversations held with the co-chairs and suggested that it could still be a useful addition. The USCDI TF would be making recommendations with an awareness of the PHDS TF's recommendations.

- Steven responded that he would bring this text over into the Supplementary Recommendations and invited all TF members to add comments. He will work on editing the text.

DRAFT TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT TO THE HITAC

USCDI TF members will have an opportunity to view the draft USCDI TF Recommendations Report during offline work and will work to finalize the document at the next meeting.

Action Items

As homework, USCDI TF members were asked to review the TF recommendations documents, to leave comments within the shared Google document, to prepare any special assignments given to them specifically during the meeting, and to be prepared to discuss finalizing the recommendations at the next meeting.

TF members were encouraged to continue to review meeting materials on the TF website at
https://www.healthit.gov/hitac/committees/us-core-data-interoperability-task-force-2021

Public Comment

Steven welcomed members of the public and encouraged them to submit comments within the chat feature in Adobe and/or by phone during the public comment period.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS RECEIVED VIA PHONE

There were no public comments received via phone.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS RECEIVED VIA ADOBE CONNECT

Hans Buitendijk: I'm on.

Sheryl Turney: waiting to get into the call

Sheryl Turney: I'm in

Denise Webb: Steven--I am on but have laryngitis so will use chat to save my voice if I have any comments

Ricky Bloomfield: Just to be clear - Recommendation 03 is supposed to be separate from use of terminologies?

Ricky Bloomfield: Or are we including terminologies in "value sets"

Hans Buitendijk: Past ISAs are here: https://www.healthit.gov/isa/isa-publications

Denise Webb: Should we put this list in priority order based on some specific criteria?

Grace Cordovano, PhD, BCPA: I would like to add for consideration data associated with clinical decision support systems, AL/ML based predictive analytics, that generate reports, scores, data use at point of care to guide patient care.

Denise Webb: It is other federal programs that require the collection of the data, such as CMS

Denise Webb: I think we should remove Recommendation 16

Resources
USCDI TF 2021 Website
USCDI TF 2021 – August 17, 2021, Meeting Agenda
USCDI TF 2021 – August 17, 2021, Meeting Slides
USCDI TF 2021 – August 17, 2021, Webpage
USCDI TF Meeting Calendar Webpage

Adjournment
Steven thanked everyone for their work at the current meeting and reminded TF members that the recommendations to the HITAC would be presented on September 9, 2021.

The next meeting of the USCDI TF will be held on Tuesday, August 31, 2021, and the TF will finalize its recommendations.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 a.m. E.T.