

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**Department of Health Care Finance**



Office of the Senior Deputy Director and  
Medicaid Director

**MDL # 22-01**

**MEDICAID DIRECTOR LETTER**

**TO:** All DC Medicaid Providers, Beneficiaries, and All Interested Parties

**DATE:** March 31, 2022

**SUBJECT:** **2022 State Medicaid Health IT Plan (SMHP) Update Publication**

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**Purpose**

The District of Columbia Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF) is pleased to share the [2022 State Medicaid Health IT Plan \(SMHP\) Update](#). The [2022 SMHP Update](#) is intended to review both the District's progress to date against the goals of the [2018 SMHP](#) and discuss the current and future digital health needs within the Medicaid program. This report is divided into five sections that summarize findings, identify opportunities, and articulate recommendations derived from this SMHP Update effort.

The [2022 SMHP Update](#) was developed by DHCF, through the Health Care Reform and Innovation Administration (HCRIA) and in collaboration with the DC Health Information Exchange (HIE) Policy Board and District agency partners, including the DC Department of Health (DC Health) and the DC Department of Behavioral Health.

**Background**

DHCF is the District's State Medicaid Agency (SMA) and serves as its State Health IT Coordinator. The SMHP is the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requirement for all SMAs.

The District articulated the strategy and planned activities to advance health IT and HIE in its [2018-2023 State Medicaid Health Information Technology Plan](#). The purpose of this update is to:

- Describe how the health IT and HIE landscape has changed since the original SMHP environmental scan;
- Assess the impact of HITECH and other DHCF efforts over the past three years; and
- Update DHCF's plan for the future of digital health initiatives.

DHCF engaged the DC Primary Care Association (DCPCA) and a private healthcare consulting firm, John Snow, Inc. (JSI), to conduct the analysis using a mixed-methods approach. The team collected and analyzed both qualitative and quantitative data.

DHCF acknowledges the tremendous support and feedback from these stakeholders in the development of the SMHP. Between June 8 and August 19, 2021, HCRIA and its consultants conducted 41 stakeholder interviews and 11 focus groups. These participants included Medicaid beneficiaries, District residents, representatives from hospitals and health systems, ambulatory providers, behavioral health providers, long-term care supports and service providers, community service organizations, managed care organizations, private payers, and DC government agencies. The information gathered as part of these stakeholder outreach efforts was vital to the SMHP's development.

While the [2022 SMHP Update](#) serves as the final update of the District's SMHP required by CMS via the HITECH Act, DHCF and stakeholders recognize that the work of building digital health infrastructure to support the Medicaid program and the District is not finished. The SMHP is a *living document* and will be updated regularly to address ongoing needs and opportunities and refine the District's digital health strategy in partnership with health system stakeholders.

In the next phase of its work, the District must continue to support and incentivize the use of digital health tools in a more consistent and sophisticated way. As DHCF works with sister agencies and partner organizations to plan future investments and priorities for digital health, the following recommendations are provided for consideration.

The following seven recommendations are provided to support DHCF's goal of providing whole-person, integrated care:

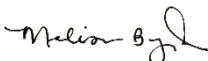
1. Develop and Publish a Bi-Annual Evaluation and Strategic Plan, including Metrics to Effectively Assess Digital Health Impact
2. Broaden and Diversify Investments in the DC HIE through Interagency Collaboration to Address Technology Gaps, Build District-wide Digital Health Capacity, and Support the Long-Term Sustainability of the DC HIE
3. Invest in District-wide Population Health Analytics, including Access to Priority Data
4. Engage Community-Based Organizations and Facilitate Partnerships with Clinical Providers to Expand Access and Use of Social Needs Information in the DC HIE
5. Enhance the DC HIE Consumer Experience, for both Providers and Patients
6. Improve Education and Communication to Increase Awareness of the DC HIE
7. Develop and Promote Payment Models and Provider Incentives to Drive Adoption and Use of the DC HIE

By developing a digital health infrastructure using the proposed health data utility model described in the [2022 SMHP Update](#), DHCF has proposed a robust, future-oriented strategy to ensure District residents' health data is available whenever and wherever it is needed to support patient-centered care and improve health outcomes.

**Contact**

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Sincerely,



Melisa Byrd  
Senior Deputy Director/Medicaid Director

**Cc:** DC Hospital Association  
DC Primary Care Association  
DC Health Care Association  
DC Home Health Association  
DC Behavioral Health Association  
DC Coalition of Disability Service Providers  
Medical Society of DC