

Governor Crist Designates Team to Capture Health IT Economic Stimulus Dollars

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Florida Governor Charlie Crist named the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) as the entity to lead the state's efforts to draw down economic stimulus funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) for health information technology initiatives. The Health Information Exchange Coordinating Committee (HIECC) will advise the agency.

Under the federal stimulus plan, a state or qualified state-designated entity must consult with stakeholders and apply for federal funding and/or implementation grants to promote health information technology.

ACHA's secretary chairs HIECC, which includes representatives of health care providers and organizations, health plans, consumers, health information organizations, information technology organizations, Florida medical schools, and the Florida Department of Health. The first task of HIECC is to develop a Health Information Exchange (HIE) Plan, which will describe the goals and objectives for electronic health information exchange. The plan will build on current activities and will address coordination with related economic stimulus funded programs, including broadband infrastructure to access health care providers.

An overview of the [Florida HIE Plan](#) is available on the [Florida Health Information Network](#). Public comments are being accepted until May 22, 2009, for the following categories:

- Broadband infrastructure
- Multi-payer and Medicaid HIE
- Personal health records
- Population health
- Provider interfaces to HIE
- Regional HIE gateways
- State-level HIE
- Vision statement and objectives of the plan

GovWin's Take

- Florida is ahead of several states in its planning for economic stimulus related health information technology funding. They are taking an integrated view of President Obama's objectives and are seeking to integrate multiple funding streams, including grants for broadband, to advance their efforts to create a state-level HIE that links all facets of the health care industry together to improve the quality of health care and reduce costs. Getting involved with those efforts will put vendors in a strong position with other states.
- Vendors that provide solutions to support health information technologies should send well-reasoned comments supporting those solutions before the deadline or will find themselves reacting to the state's plans instead of influencing the objectives of the plan.

For additional information about Florida's HIE activities, HIECC [meeting minutes and other information](#) are available on the [Florida Health Information Network](#). GovWin members that subscribe to our [State and Local Health Care Vertical Profiles](#) should also review the [Florida Health IT Application Profile](#).