



HIT Commons Fact Sheet on Supporting Community Information Exchange August 2023

Background

HIT Commons has been monitoring the Community Information Exchange (CIE)ⁱ landscape since 2019 and briefly convened an Oregon CIE Advisory Group from December 2019 through March 2020, when it was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the pandemic, CIE technology and adoption accelerated voluntarily through the leadership of health systems and Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) around the state, with convening and operational support from the Oregon Health Leadership Council (OHL) and 211info.

[“Connect Oregon”](#) CIE is currently operational statewide in all 36 counties through the sponsorship of leading health systems, CCOs, Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS)– Office of Resilience and Emergency Management, and OptumCare. Individuals in Oregon (regardless of insurance status) can voluntarily consent to have closed-loop referrals sent on their behalf through the network of connected partners.ⁱⁱ

But there is more work to do. Onboarding more organizations overall, and in particular, county programs, housing providers, and behavioral health providers are key priorities for Connect Oregon partners. Implementing new functionality to support the 1115 Medicaid Waiver Health Related Social Needs (HRSN) benefit and the CCO Incentive Metrics for Social Determinants of Health and Social Emotional Health is also needed. An updated and expanded governance structure to support statewide and regional tables and elevate the voice of community partners in network management and community investment are critical. Conferences, communications, and other resources are also needed to support network partners and put Connect Oregon on a sustainable path toward addressing social needs statewide and improving health across all communities in Oregon.

Moving Forward with CIE

At its July 20, 2023 meeting, the HIT Commons Governance Board voted in support of recognizing [Connect Oregon](#) as the predominant statewide CIE in Oregon. (The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) was not present at this Governance Board meeting and would have abstained from voting on this matter. OHA is vendor neutral with regards to CIE technology providers and therefore does not endorse any specific vendor operating in the state.)



The Board also resolved to pursue opportunities (on a case-by-case basis) to leverage Connect Oregon for shared priorities. As part of this action, HIT Commons recognized the broad adoption of Connect Oregon statewide, critical integrations built to date, independent research evaluation efforts underway, and strong leadership from CCOs and others in Oregon to continue their partnership and support of Connect Oregon.

Moving forward, HIT Commons will:

- Seek project opportunities to further advance implementation and use of Connect Oregon as part of its leadership priorities to support [Whole Person Care](#).
- Seek project opportunities to support the 1115 HRSN Infrastructure needs around Housing, Nutrition, and Climate Supports.
- Welcome collaboration with the Oregon Health Authority, ODHS, Oregon Housing and Community Services, the Department of Early Learning and Care, other state agencies, and other organizations to leverage the Connect Oregon network to meet statewide priorities around health and health equity.
- Seek to align existing community networks of providers with Connect Oregon workflows to enhance shared priorities.

The HIT Commons Governance Board will review and approve projects to move forward.

Questions and More Information

Mark Hetz, Executive Director, HIT Commons Mark@orhealthleadershipcouncil.org

Liz Whitworth, Managing Director OHLC Liz@orhealthleadershipcouncil.org

About HIT Commons

[HIT Commons](#) is a shared public/private governance model designed to accelerate and advance health information technology (HIT) adoption and use across the state. It is co-sponsored by Oregon Health Leadership Council and Oregon Health Authority and responsible for overseeing two core programs: Oregon EDIE/Collective Platform and Oregon Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) Integration. The role of [HIT Commons Governance](#) is to accelerate the selection, procurement, financing, implementation and adoption of HIT in Oregon, improving the effective use and oversight of statewide HIT initiatives. HIT Commons current leadership priorities include supporting [Whole Person Care](#).



About OHLC

[The Oregon Health Leadership Council \(OHLC\)](#) is a co-sponsor of HIT Commons. OHLC was formed in 2008 and is currently comprised of the leaders of hospital systems, medical groups, health plans, the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, the Oregon Medical Association, and the Oregon Primary Care Association. OHLC’s mission is to co-create a healthcare system that is equitable, accessible, high-quality, affordable, and sustainable for all people in Oregon. OHLC’s focus areas include advancing interventions and initiatives to reduce healthcare costs, foster a thriving workforce, and promote whole-person care.

About [Connect Oregon](#)

Connect Oregon (powered by Unite Us technology) is a collaborative network of partners across healthcare, government, nonprofit sectors, and beyond. Partners in the network are securely connected through Unite Us’ shared software to identify, deliver, and pay for services that meet the needs of the individuals in their communities. Joining the network is at no cost for community-based organizations and many organizations that are considered part of the safety net, like community health centers, tribal clinics, and mental health centers. Connect Oregon is sponsored by Samaritan Health Services and InterCommunity Health Network CCO (IHN-CCO), Kaiser Permanente, Central Oregon Health Council, PacificSource, CareOregon, Columbia Pacific CCO, Jackson Care Connect, Health Share of Oregon, AllCare Health, EOCCO, Yamhill Community Care, Advanced Health, the ODHS – Office of Resilience and Emergency Management, OptumCare, and Trillium Community Health Plan. OHLC is a statewide convener for the network. The coordination center is powered by 211info and supports community engagement.

ⁱ [Per OHA’s HITOC CIE Workgroup](#), a Community Information Exchange (CIE) is defined as: A network of collaborative partners using a multidirectional technology platform to connect people to the services and supports they need. Partners may include human and social service, healthcare, and other organizations. Technology functions must include closed loop referrals, a shared resource directory, and informed consent.

ⁱⁱ Connect Oregon can help Oregon achieve the objectives of [Healthier Together Oregon](#), the State’s 2020 – 2024 State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). The plan includes five overarching priorities to achieve health equity. The Implementation framework includes Technology and Innovation strategies, including support for statewide community information exchange ([see page 27 of full SHIP report](#)).