February 17, 2016

Walter G. Suarez, M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director, Health IT Strategy & Policy
Chair, NCVHS
Kaiser Permanente
2221 Broadbirch Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20904-1984

Dear Mr. Suarez:

I am writing concerning the critical topic of patient identification and the challenge it poses to healthcare providers and patients across the country. The College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME), an organization representing more than 1,800 chief information officers (CIOs), respectfully requests the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics (NCVHS) host a hearing devoted to facilitating an industry discussion of the status of patient identification and matching systems. CHIME believes accurate patient identification is so critical that it has embarked on a journey to identity a solution to this urgent need.

The past decade has seen greater use of electronic health records (EHRs). At the same time, the digitization of healthcare has coincided with a push by consumers to have unfettered electronic access to their records. These trends, coupled with the demands from government, consumers and the industry to have an interoperable healthcare system, have increased the importance of being able to accurately identify patients and match them with their electronic records across the care continuum. Yet, according to a study by the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) in 2014, 7 out of every 100 patient records are mismatched. Worse still, the error rate is typically closer to 10 to 20 percent within a healthcare entity, and it rises to 50 to 60 percent when entities exchange with each other. In CHIME's own 2012 study, we found that 20 percent of our members could trace an adverse medical event to problems with patient identification and/or patient matching.

CHIME recognizes that accurate patient identification can greatly reduce the risk of preventable errors, significantly increase quality of care, and reduce unnecessary costs, which is why we are sponsoring a global competition aimed at incentivizing innovators to accelerate the creation and adoption of a solution for ensuring 100 percent accuracy in identifying patients in the U.S. Through [the CHIME Healthcare Innovation Trust's National Patient ID Challenge,](#) we will be awarding a $1 million dollar prize for the winning solution that can: easily and quickly identify patients; protect patient privacy; achieve adoption by the vast majority of patients, providers, insurers, and other stakeholders; and scale to handle all patients in the U.S.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our perspective on patient identification and matching and hope that NCVHS will consider our request for a hearing devoted to this critical topic. My staff Mari Savickis, CHIME's vice president of federal affairs, msavickis@chimecentral.org, is happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Russell Branzell, FCHIME, CHCIO
CEO & President, CHIME

Marc Probst, CHCIO
Chairman, CHIME Board of Trustees & CIO, Intermountain Healthcare

About CHIME

The College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME) is an executive organization dedicated to serving chief information officers and other senior healthcare IT leaders. With more than 1,800 CIO members and over 150 healthcare IT vendors and professional services firms, CHIME provides a highly interactive, trusted environment enabling senior professional and industry leaders to collaborate; exchange best practices; address professional development needs; and advocate the effective use of information management to improve the health and healthcare in the communities they serve. For more information, please visit www.chimecentral.org.