

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 23, 2021

Micky Tripathi, Ph.D., M.P.P.
National Coordinator
Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology
330 C Street, SW
Floor 7, Switzer Building
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Dr. Tripathi,

We thank you for the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology's (ONC) investigation into strategies to improve patient identity and matching in the forthcoming report to Congress. Patient misidentification is an ever-increasing problem in our healthcare system, and our system is in need of a national strategy to address the issue of patient identification and matching.

As you know, in the Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) Further Consolidated Appropriations Act Congress directed ONC to provide a report on patient identification and matching. Specifically, Congress directed the following in the FY20 Further Consolidated Appropriations Act report language:

The agreement directs ONC, in coordination with other appropriate Federal agencies provide a report to the Committees one year after enactment of this Act studying the current technological and operational methods that improve identification of patients. The report shall evaluate the effectiveness of current methods and recommend actions that increase the likelihood of an accurate match of patients to their health care data. Such recommendations may or may not include a standard for a unique patient health identifier. The report shall include the risks and benefits to privacy and security of patient information.

We applaud the ONC's commitment to improving interoperability nationwide and encouraging a more interoperable system for patients and providers alike. We are also encouraged by the ONC's attention over the last two years to the issue of patient identification and matching in the preparation of this report, including its extensive engagement with stakeholders on this critical issue.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to exacerbate the issues with patient identification and matching which endanger patient safety and privacy. Now more than ever, Congress needs the recommended actions directed to be included in this report to ensure that patients are being accurately matched with their data.

We urge the ONC to publish and share the report directed in the FY20 Further Consolidated Appropriations Act to Congress as soon as possible. We appreciate your leadership on this issue and we look forward to receiving the report on patient identification and matching.

Sincerely,



Bill Foster
Member of Congress



Mike Kelly
Member of Congress

/S/

Suzan Delbene
Member of Congress

/S/

John B. Larson
Member of Congress

/S/

Fred Keller
Member of Congress

/S/

Nikema Williams
Member of Congress

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Burgess Owens
Member of Congress

/S/

Blake Moore
Member of Congress

/S/

Ami Bera, M.D.
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Al Lawson
Member of Congress

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Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

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Ron Kind
Member of Congress

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Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

/S/

Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress