

December 31, 2025  
Brandon Metzler  
Clerk of the Legislature  
P.O. Box 94604  
Lincoln, NE 68509

Senator Brian Hardin  
Chairperson, Health and Human Services Committee  
District 48  
P.O. Box 94604  
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Mr. Metzler & Chairperson Hardin

Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. 81-6,128 as part of the Population Health Information Act, attached is a report regarding the activities of the Health Information Technology Board for 2025.

I apologize for the delay in submitting this report, which was due by November 15. As chair, it is my responsibility to ensure that the report was submitted in a timely manner. Future reports will be submitted by their due dates. If you have questions about the report, please contact me at [pvuchetich@arxsine.com](mailto:pvuchetich@arxsine.com)

If you have any questions about the board operations, please contact the Board Administrator at [legal@cynchealth.org](mailto:legal@cynchealth.org)

## **Background**

In 2020, the Nebraska Legislature passed LB 1183, the Population Health Information Act. This act created the Health Information Technology (HIT) Board as a body to advise on criteria surrounding the statewide health information exchange (HIE) and prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP). The HIT Board also acts as the body that evaluates and grants permission for the release of certain data requests if all state and federal regulations are met. The Board is also meant to give the PDMP more flexibility in data collection as technology and terminology changes over time, through allowing changes to be made regarding the type of identifying information collected in the system in lieu of introducing legislation each time a change is needed.

In 2021, the Legislature passed LB 411, a bill which requires participation in the statewide health information exchange by certain health care facilities and health insurance plans. The HIT Board is tasked with establishing criteria surrounding the claims and clinical information collected by the health information exchange, as well as approving or denying any applications for waiver from this required participation due to technological burden.

The HIT Board is composed of seventeen members: fifteen members who serve five year terms, who are appointed by the Governor with approval by the Legislature, and two non-voting ex-officio seats filled by the current chairs of the Appropriations and the Health and Humans Services committees. The majority of members on the Board are credentialed health care providers and maintaining their credential in good standing is a requirement of service. A minimum of three board members shall be appointed from each congressional district.

### **The purpose of the HIT Board is to:**

- Establish criteria for data collection and disbursement by the statewide health information exchange and the prescription drug monitoring program to improve the quality of information provided to clinicians,
- Evaluate and ensure that the statewide health information exchange is meeting technological standards for reporting of data for the prescription drug monitoring program, including the data to be collected and reported and the frequency of data collection and disbursement,
- Provide the governance oversight necessary to ensure that any health information in the statewide health information exchange and the prescription drug monitoring program may be accessed, used, or disclosed only in accordance with the privacy and security protections set forth in HIPAA, and
- Provide recommendations to the statewide health information exchange on any other matters referred to the board.

### **Board Members**

In December 2024, Drew Gonshorowski was appointed as the Director of Medicaid and Long Term Care at the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, replacing Matt Ahern as the Interim Director. The Health Care Payor representative transitioned from Matt Ahern to Drew Gonshorowski at the June 2025 meeting.

At the September 2025 meeting, Senator Brian Hardin replaced Senator Ben Hanson as the Chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature (*ex-officio* member).

**The 2025 members of the HIT Board are listed below along with their statutory position** as referenced in Neb. Rev. Stat. 81-6,127 (2).

<b>Statute Seat</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Congressional District</b>
(a) Individual with experience in operating the PDMP	<b>Felicia Quintana-Zinn</b>	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	7/31/2021-	1
(b) Physician	<b>Dr. Stephen Salzbrenner</b>	UNMC	7/31/2021-	2
(b) Physician – <i>family practice</i>	<b>Vacant</b>			
(c) Pharmacist	<b>Dr. Phillip Vuchetich (Board Chair)</b>	Arxsine	8/30/2022-	1
(d) Alcohol and drug counselor providing services for a state-licensed treatment program	<b>Dr. Monalisa McGee-Baratta (Board Vice Chair)</b>	Salvation Army	7/31/2021-	2
(e) Provider board-certified in pain management	<b>Dr. Kimberley Haynes-Henson</b>	UNMC	7/31/2021-	2
(f) Hospital administrator	<b>Manuela Banner</b>	Memorial Community Hospital and Health System	7/31/2021-	3
(g) Dentist	<b>Dr. Mark Latta</b>	Creighton University School of Dentistry	11/23/2022-	2
(h) Nurse practitioner authorized to	<b>Dr. Douglass Haas</b>	UNMC College of Nursing –	8/30/2022-	3

prescribe medication		Kearney Division		
(i) Veterinarian	<b>Dr. Jessika Benes</b>	Mid Plains Mobile Vet	7/31/2021-	3
(j) Representative of NE DHHS	<b>Ashley Newmyer</b>	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	7/31/2021-	1
(k) Representative of a delegate (as defined in 71-2454)	<b>Dr. Aimee Black</b>	Nebraska Total Care	7/31/2021-	1
(l) Health care payor	<b>Drew Gonshorowski</b>	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	12/16/2024-	
(m) Credentialed health information management professional	<b>Vacant</b>			
(n) Representative of the statewide HIE	<b>Dr. Jaime Bland</b>	CyncHealth	7/31/2021-	1
(o) Chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature	<b>Senator Ben Hansen</b>	<i>NE Legislature</i>	<i>ex-officio</i>	N/A
(o) Chairperson of the Appropriations Committee of the Legislature	<b>Senator Robert Clements</b>	<i>NE Legislature</i>	<i>ex-officio</i>	N/A

The following two Board vacancies remain open for appointment by the Governor per Neb. Rev. Stat. 81-6,127 (3) (d)

- (b) Physician – *family practice* [Vacant since November 2023]
- (m) Credentialed health information management professional [Vacant since December 2023]

### **2024-2025 HIT Board Meetings and Activities**

Since the 2024 annual report was submitted, the board has held the following meetings:

- **December 12, 2024** - virtual
- **March 27, 2025** - virtual
- **June 12, 2025** - in-person in Lincoln, NE. No official business was conducted due to lack of quorum.
- **September 11, 2025** - in-person in La Vista, NE
- **December 4, 2025** – originally planned as a virtual; change to in-person in La Vista, NE to ensure at least half of the 2025 meetings are in-person.

For the 2025 calendar year, meetings were scheduled quarterly. Two meetings were designated as “in-person” meetings, and two were designated as virtual. In order to comply with the open meeting requirement that at least half of the meetings are held in-person, the December 2025 meeting was changed to in-person because the board did not have a quorum at the in-person meeting in June.

Notice was posted on the Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar and agendas were posted publicly prior to all meetings, pursuant to the Open Meetings Act.

CyncHealth, the statewide health information exchange is the statutorily designated administrator of the Health Information Technology Board per Neb. Rev. Stat. § 71-2455, maintains copies of all agenda, meeting minutes, and HIT board policies which are available to the public on the website (<https://cynchealth.org/resource-center/nebraska-hit-board/>)

## **Meeting Content and Activities**

In addition to decision-making actions and policy adoption, the HIT Board also received several presentations throughout the year intended to educate them on topics related to data exchange, such as federal regulations, privacy and security, technology developments, and status updates from the designated statewide health information exchange.

**The following topics were presented for board education and awareness since the submission of the 2024 annual report:**

eHealth Data Exchange for Veterans Administration PDMP data sharing

Payor Data Standards Policy Compliance Metrics

DHHS Historical Project Updates

### **Waivers of Participation**

Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-6,125 (3) (e), “A health care facility may apply to the board for a waiver from the requirement to participate under this subsection due to a technological burden. The board shall review the application and determine whether to waive the requirement. If the board waives the requirement for a health care facility, the board shall review the waiver annually to determine if the health care facility continues to qualify for the waiver.”

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Avera Health Plans	Temporary exemption during conversion to new claims system	Exemption Approved

Several other Health Plans communicated with the Board that they are unable to comply with the “Health Information Exchange Health Insurance Plan Data Standards Policy” without more specific information from the Board because the statute is too vague, and the information requested by CyncHealth may contain “highly confidential, proprietary, and ... trade secret” information. In response, the Board approved a standing policy committee to review the policy and develop a technical implementation guide that addresses both the statutory requirements and Health Insurance Plan concerns.

## **Projects Presented to HIT Board for Approval**

Under the Population Health Information Act, the HIT Board is tasked with approving the dispersing of aggregated and de-identified PDMP information for public health or research purposes.

Data requestors are predominantly universities conducting research. Requests move through internal governance processes at CyncHealth and its research division, the Nebraska Healthcare Collaborative. There is a comprehensive set of criteria that requestors must meet, including collaboration with the Internal Research Board (IRB) of the institution where they reside. PDMP-only research requests may be submitted directly to the HIT Board.

### **The HIT Board approved providing PDMP data for the following projects since the submission of the 2024 annual report:**

PDMP Data Exchange through eHealth Exchange Pilot Project

Real World Evidence Study: Impact of Semaglutide on COVID Mortality

Bridges to Mental Health: Expanding the Behavioral Health Workforce with a Novel Educational Approach for Primary and Specialty Care Providers

Evaluating Vaccination Data Quality: A Comparison of EHR and HIE Vaccination Records in Nebraska

MIPS Promoting Interoperability PDMP Query Measure (PI\_EP\_2)

Assessment of GLP-1 Receptor Agonist Safety Using the Nebraska PDMP Database

### **The HIT Board reviewed providing PDMP data for the following projects since the submission of the 2024 annual report:**

Direction to Provide Extract Deliverables to Regenstrief (FDA & N3C)

Justice Study via Harvard in collaboration with NE DHHS

To get more information on the Nebraska Healthcare Collaborative and view the standards that requests for information must meet, visit:

<https://cynchealth.org/about/nebraska-healthcare-collaborative>

To view the Nebraska Healthcare Collaborative project submission guidelines, you can view the manual here:

<https://cynchealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/NHC-Project-Proposal-Guidelines-Manual.pdf>



## **Policies Approved by the HIT Board**

Under the Population Health Information Act, the HIT Board is charged with adopting policies and procedures necessary to carry out its duties.

Proposed policies are presented to the board for review in the pre-meeting materials. During the meetings, policies are presented by their sponsors, followed by questions and discussion from the board. All policies are voted on by a roll call vote, with a simple majority of present active voting members required for approval.

Policies that are brought to the board from the designated statewide HIE and PDMP, CyncHealth, undergo an internal review process prior to being brought to the Board for approval. All CyncHealth policies must go through internal data governance review and approval processes to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, industry standards, and best practices for data-sharing.

### **The following policies and specifications have been adopted by the Board since the submission of the 2024 annual report:**

March 2025	Health Information Exchange Health Insurance Plan Data Standards Policy
March 2025	PDMP Data Requests Policy
March 2025	PDMP Interstate Data Sharing Policy

For easy reference and transparency, all adopted policies are available publicly on the HIT Board's website: <https://cynchealth.org/resource-center/nebraska-hit-board/>.

The board received feedback from multiple health insurance plans related to compliance issues with Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-6,125, and the "Health Information Exchange Health Insurance Plan Data Standards Policy". At the December 2025 meeting, the Board approved a standing policy committee to prioritize and review existing policies and bring policy recommendations to each regularly scheduled quarterly board meeting. The policy committee will ask for feedback from the State DHHS, the statewide HIE, as well as members of the public interested in providing guidance on policies and technical implementation guides. Board review and approval of all policy recommendations will be at regularly scheduled board meetings.

This report was compiled by the HIT Board chair and vice chair, with review and input from its members.

*Board Administrator contact:* [legal@cynchealth.org](mailto:legal@cynchealth.org)

*HIT Board website:* <https://cynchealth.org/resource-center/nebraska-hit-board/>