



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

SCR 78/ SR 41

REQUESTING THE COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS
FOR ELECTRONIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT.

Testimony Presented Before the

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND
COMMITTEE ON MEDIA, ARTS, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

April 4, 2005

by

T. Samuel Shomaker, MD, JD
Acting Dean
John A. Burns School of Medicine
University of Hawaii at Manoa

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State Capitol, Conference Room 016, 2:45 p.m.

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Chairs Baker and Fukunaga, Vice Chairs Chun Oakland and Ige and Committee members.

The University of Hawaii, John A. Burns School of Medicine testifies in strong support of Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 78/ Senate Resolution (SR) 41. Such an initiative would be invaluable for the people of Hawaii to improve the security of electronic health data during routine use or during the transition between care providers. Such an initiative will not be successful unless there is the cooperation of the Hawaii's health care industry and we are willing to play whatever role that may be appropriate to move this initiative forward.

Collaborative efforts in standards development will result in greater adoption and acceptance of electronic health and medical records management practices by public and private sector health care providers and related entities. By tapping into a greater pool of intellectual resources with a broader base of practical experience and taking into consideration the largest common denominator, collaborative, agreed upon standards will make implementation by individual organizations more palatable. The development of such supported standards will reduce the implementation costs and risks of individual health care entities in adopting these standards by providing well-defined technical guidelines and eliminating the risk of using purely proprietary data formats and security practices. As such, the standards alone would be more likely to propagate the adoption of electronic health records by the state's health care industry.

These standards would be invaluable to the Department of Health in providing disease surveillance in this important new era of bioterrorism. As electronic health care records are being utilized by more and more health care entities, standards will ensure that data can be readily retrieved as state, regional, and national initiatives in disease surveillance are developed or mandated.

However, with respect to this collaborative effort, there are some key considerations that need to be made:

- Integration of this collaborative effort at a national and international level. Our state, with a large military and tourism presence, has at any given time a significant national and international population that we need to consider during this undertaking. We also want to

avoid duplication of effort with other similar collaboratives that may exist at other state or national locations.

- Agreed upon scope of effort. Because of the numerous parties involved in this effort, the agreement of scope (the level of detail that we will address in the development of these standards) will be a large effort. While this is definitely a worthy endeavor, it will take much time to produce concrete results from this collaborative and expectations should be adjusted accordingly.
- Funding considerations. While this project should definitely produce a long-term payback in terms of its overall benefit, some significant short-term funding must be appropriated, depending upon the agreed upon scope, for research and development activities and possible hardware and software investments. This source of funding, whether from private or public resources must be addressed.

The obvious benefits of wide-spread standardized electronic health and medical record adoption are effective and secure dissemination of patient and health related information. Such information will result in cost-effective and expedient information sharing processes versus manually intensive, paper-based records with the people of Hawaii, as patients and providers, deriving the greatest benefit.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.