

# Focus Group: Interoperability

Topic: Interfaces

07/18/2024

**Indian Health Service**  
Health Information Technology  
Modernization Program



# Zoom Meeting Guide

## Meeting Technical Notes

If you lose connectivity during the session, simply re-click on the **Join** link to re-access meeting

If you experience technical difficulties, please send an Email to [Modernization@ihs.gov](mailto:Modernization@ihs.gov) to speak with a **Coordinator**

Please  
MUTE



### Microphone

- Click to mute or unmute yourself
- Red slash indicates you are on mute.

Please  
Use Chat  
Feature



### Chat

Click to provide input during the meeting

### Participants

Click this to access the participant list

### Camera

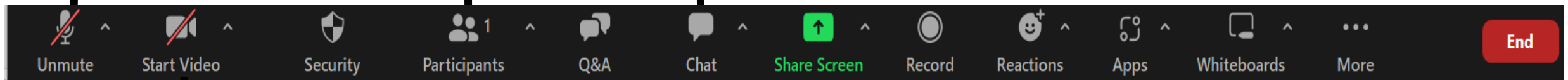
- Click to turn camera on or off
- Red slash indicates camera is off

### Share Screen

Click this to share a presentation/document or your desktop screen

### Reactions

Click to select an emoji to share in the meeting instead of speaking



# Meeting Courtesies

- Participation in the focus group is voluntary and has no term limits
- Be prompt, be prepared, and be ready with constructive feedback
- Share constructive individual feedback via engagement during the meeting
- Communicate with grace and respect for all participants
- Be engaged, listen attentively and actively, share ideas, ask questions, contribute
- It's all right to refrain from discussing specific topics if you are uncomfortable
- All responses are valid—there are no right or wrong answers
- Maintain others' privacy by not discussing details outside the group
- Any topics or ideas not directly related to the current agenda will be 'promptly parked' and revisited at an appropriate time

# Disclaimer



Focus Groups (FGs) inform and support decisions and governance of the Health Information Technology (IT) Modernization Program. FGs are NOT decision-making bodies and at NO time will focus groups provide consensus, recommendations or advice to the Agency that would trigger Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. App. § 1-16 additional legal requirements.



# Welcome & Introductions

Dave Zimmerman - *Interoperability Focus Group  
Facilitator*

Charles Cross - *Engineering Branch, DHITMO*

Bobby Villines - *HIT Interoperability and Health  
Information Exchange Manager*



# Overview

## Purpose

The Focus Group will help the Executive Steering Committee (ESC) to understand the strategies used by other Federal agencies, Tribes, and Urban Indian Organizations to modernize their Health IT capabilities resulting in performance changes in healthcare delivery. The participants from this group will review and suggest strategies, operational requirements, clinical practice standards, and performance measures on an individual basis, that inform the interoperability solution design and project planning.

## Agenda

- Introduction
- Interfaces
- Open Discussion
- Closing Remarks

## Desired Outcomes

- Improve shared understanding among Focus Group Participants
- Capture issues and lessons learned data
- **Improve the system and tool** to support the patient's and healthcare teams' utilization of a new electronic health record
- Your **input** is important and provides valuable information and understanding the end-user needs necessary to support the modernization efforts

# Health IT Modernization Guiding Principles



**DESIGN** solutions that deliver culturally appropriate care, quality, safety and improved patient outcomes



**PARTNER** across I/T/U for collaborative decision-making that is fully informed by clinical and business users in the field



**EMPHASIZE** usability and human-centered design



**CONFIGURE** solutions to meet organizational requirements with minimal customization



**ENGAGE** patients in their health journey through improved patient access



**UTILIZE** recognized best practices across clinical and business processes



**ADOPT** enterprise technology solutions that support continuity of care



**PROVIDE** timely and complete communication, training and tools to support a successful deployment



# April 2024 Focus Group Highlights

*April 2, 2024 – Focus Group Summary*

- 23 Participants from 7 different I/T/U's
- Interoperability 101 Discussion
  - Advantages of using an interoperability platform that will ensure access to medical records across different healthcare settings
- Challenges and Lessons learned
  - Tribal, state, or regional considerations





Topic 1  
*Interfaces*



# Topic 1 Discussion & Questions

# Interfaces Refresher

- Definition: An interface is a point of interaction between different systems, devices or components, allowing them to communicate with each other
- User Interface (UI): The interaction point between humans and machines. GUI, CLI, ...
- Programming Interfaces: Used to build software applications:
  - Application Programming Interface (API): a standard way for software entities to communicate
  - Graphical User Interface (GUI): a standard way for a program to communicate through graphical elements, usually a human
- Hardware Interface: Physical and logical connections through which different hardware components communicate, e.g., USB, HDMI, Serial, Network
- Network Interface: Connects a system to a network of other systems. Typically referred to as a network interface card (NIC)

# Interfaces Refresher, continued

- While there are proprietary systems that are closed, in general, each type of interface is built on standards, conventions, or specifications that are available to both sides of the communication process
- IHS is still in the discovery phase of identifying the systems that need to be interfaced, including the obvious ones, i.e., lab, radiology, pharmacy equipment
- We would like to get input from the group on what “non-obvious” systems we should actively prepare for?

A scenic landscape featuring a forest with trees in various shades of green and yellow, a small pond in the middle ground, and a cloudy sky. The scene is framed by a white circle in the center, which contains the text. The foreground shows some bare branches and a few leaves in shades of brown and orange.

Topic 2  
*Open  
Discussion*



# Topic 2 Discussion & Questions

# References



- IHS Health Modernization webpage:  
<https://www.ihs.gov/hit/>



# Planning for Next Meeting

Dave Zimmerman - *Interoperability Focus Group*  
Facilitator





# Upcoming 2024 Focus Group Sessions

Each Focus Group session is held every 3 months (quarterly)

## Focus Group Kick Off (Q1)

Feb 29, 2024

1PM ET Virtual

Core Topic:

*Interoperability Intro*

## Focus Group Meeting (Q2)

April 2, 2024

3PM ET Virtual

Core Topic:

*What is Interoperability?*

## Focus Group Meeting (Q3)

July 18, 2024

1PM ET Virtual

Core Topic:

*Interfaces*

## Focus Group Meeting (Q4)

Oct 17, 2024

1PM ET Virtual

\*Proposed Topic:

*Centralized Interoperability Suite (CIS)*

*\*Subject to change based on participation*

Submit Topic Requests to [Modernization@ihs.gov](mailto:Modernization@ihs.gov)



# Upcoming Engagements

Dave Zimmerman - *Interoperability Focus Group*  
Facilitator

# Statement of Interest

The IHS desires to learn which tribal and urban health care entities have an interest in becoming a tenant on the shared system.

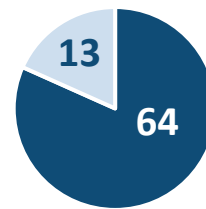
**Opportunity** for Tribes and urban Indian organizations to formally express interest in participating in the IHS enterprise EHR solution



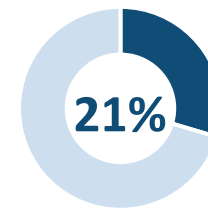
The IHS shared a Statement of Interest form where tribal and urban health care entities can indicate their interest in partnering with the IHS on the shared enterprise solution. The Statement of Interest is **NON-BINDING** and will connect partners to support system configuration, organizational assessment, and implementation planning.

The Statement of Interest was attached to a [Dear Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader letter](#) published on June 29, 2023.

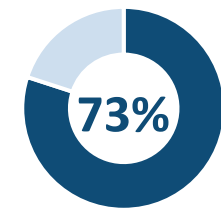
The IHS has received **77** Statement of Interest documents to date.



**64 tribal partners and 13 urban Indian organizations** have submitted a Statement of Interest to date



**21%** already use commercial health IT solutions other than or alongside RPMS



**73%** of respondents desire to implement **early** in the Modernization Program

**As of July 10, 2024**



# AUGUST

## TRIBAL CONSULTATION AND URBAN CONFER

**Multi-Tenant Domain Considerations**

*Hosted by the IHS Health IT Modernization Program*

**AUGUST 8, 2024**

**1:30-3:00 p.m. ET**

**📍 VIA ZOOM**



# 2024 TRIBAL CONSULTATION AND URBAN CONFER

with the Health IT Modernization Program

Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer (TC/UC) events provide an opportunity to work with our partners to provide and connect technology, business systems, and data to help providers and patients make informed decisions to improve care and health outcomes across Indian Country.

*Scan or click the QR codes to register*



## MULTI-TENANT DOMAIN CONSIDERATIONS



## SITE READINESS AND TRAINING



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or by following us on social media



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