AIRA AMERICAN IMMUNIZATION REGISTRY ASSOCIATION
Immunization Information Systems for a New Era

AIRA MONTHLY UPDATE

PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION REGISTRY MEETING

In mid-November I [Rebecca Coyle] attended a registry meeting hosted by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in Brasilia, Brazil. This is the second meeting of its type, the first was held in 2011, and included representatives from South American countries and a few from Africa, Asia, and Europe.

I can honestly say that while the city of Brasilia is fascinating, it wasn't nearly as interesting as the actual meeting. To describe the meeting I must warn you that any pre-conceived ideas you might have about the maturity of a registry in any of these countries must be put aside. There are some amazing things being done in countries you wouldn't expect. For some they are at the point of trying to implement a registry and for others they are struggling with many of the same things we struggle with like de-duplication, data migration, inventory management, linking with other registries, and population assessment. With one exception (grid electricity), there wasn't one barrier mentioned that at least one jurisdiction in the U.S. doesn't struggle with.

 Some of the most interesting developments came from our host country, Brazil, who is currently in the process of rolling out a new IIS in all of their states along with new national health identification cards; full implementation is slated for completion in 2014. Albania has recently developed and is now piloting an IIS in several of their regions. The premise for their system was to keep it simple and help nurses do their job. Sri Lanka is in the process of implementing a registry in their country where the registry will actually assign the national identification, a number which is comparable to our birth certificate numbers. They also have a fascinating algorithm for creating the national identification number. I mentioned the issue of electrification above, which is a real issue for Ghana, yet 85% of their population have a cell phone (yes, I did verify this number). Therefore they are harnessing cell phone technology to improve vaccination rates. Columbia has two registries, one in Bogotá and one in the rest of the country, yet they are able to exchange data and have worked very hard to make this connection work. There are just too many examples to list them all, but overall I can sum up my experience by saying we really are more alike than we are different.

DECEMBER AT AIRA

- Dec 3rd 2 – 3 p.m. ET: **AIRA Assessment Steering Committee Meeting**

- Dec 4th 12 – 1 p.m. ET: **AIRA Standards & Interoperability Steering Committee, Ad-hoc Meeting to Review HL7 IG Changes**

- Dec 4th 2 - 3 p.m. ET: **AIRA Provider Training Workgroup Meeting**

- Dec 11th 1 - 2 p.m. ET: **AIRA Standards & Interoperability Steering Committee Meeting**

- Dec 17th 3- 4pm ET: **Webinar: IIS Standards Harmonization**

- Dec 18th 2 -3 p.m. ET: **Education Steering Committee Meeting**

- Dec 19th 4 - 5 p.m. ET: **MIROW Steering Committee Meeting**

- December 25th: **AIRA Office Closed**

I also want to mention that PAHO has an interest in our MIROW work and trying to establish a similar type process for the Pan American countries and would like to translate some of our MIROW documents.

I feel truly honored to have been able to attend the meeting on behalf of AIRA and I would like to thank the Pan American Health Organization for putting together such a great meeting. I learned a lot! – Rebecca

NCVHS HEARING ON PUBLIC HEALTH DATA STANDARDS

On November 12, 2013, Frank Caniglia and I [Rebecca Coyle] attended the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics (NCVHS) Subcommittee on Standards hearing on Public Health Data Standards in Hyattsville, MD. The purpose of the hearing was to gather industry input on the state of health data standards used by public health and population health programs. The hearing started off with an overview of where and how health data standards are used across public health functions and the current status of public health data standards. There were a series of panels following the overview. Each of the panelists were asked to prepare written testimony answering the following questions:

1. Current state of public health related standards; coordination of standards development activities; representation and participation by public health in standards activities; where is public health strongest and where is weakest?
2. What are the incentives and drivers for adopting and using public health data standards; what are the barriers and challenges?
3. What is the state of information exchanges of public health data from EHR systems; what are the standards being used; what are the drivers, and incentives; what are the challenges and issues?
4. What are implementation challenges from the public health agency perspective; what are the needs (technical, resources, education, etc.) to advance adoption and use of standards by public health agencies?
5. How is privacy and security covered in public health data standards? Are there privacy and security elements embedded in the standards? Is privacy and security under a different workflow process?
6. What security standards should apply to what types of data possessed by public health?
7. What interoperability standards are needed for transfer of data from electronic health records to public health?

AIRA presented/submitted testimony during the second panel and highlighted some of the achievements of IIS including the HL7 Implementation Guide, the MIROW process and subsequent standards that have been developed, the Clinic Decision Support process and several other examples of successful implementation of standards. We also identified the following areas as most in need of additional work or development to support the advancement of IIS standards:

- *Clear standards around how EHRs will interoperate with IIS re: data elements (vaccine eligibility codes, active/inactive status codes, etc.),*
- *Standards for the receipt and consumption of IIS data into EHRs, and receipt and processing of error messages/response messages*
- *We would like to see a meeting of EHR vendors, EHR users, IIS representatives and national policy makers to develop a common vision for how bi-directional interfaces should be used*
- *Interstate data exchange, this could be one of the major topics for a second workshop hosted by the Privacy/Confidentiality Subcommittee. In our federated system, HIPAA sets a floor for disclosure for covered entities, and also has public health*

exceptions. Much of the confidentiality protections are established at the state level through laws and policies. Variations in those laws and policies may be real or perceived barriers to interstate data exchange, especially of identified data that can be re-disclosed, i.e. by an IIS

The Subcommittees on Population Health and Privacy, Confidentiality and Security will explore the need for convening a second hearing to focus on important considerations for standardized definitions of public health variables, privacy and security, population management, and community health data.

AIRA MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 2013 - 2014

The AIRA membership drive began in September. The membership year runs from October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014.   Thanks to those of you who have already renewed! If you haven't renewed your membership yet, it's not too late! Renew your membership (or join for the first time!) by visiting the membership renewal page on the AIRA website: http://www.immregistries.org/membership/renewing-membership. Just login, click on Renew Membership, and then you will be able to renew your membership or join AIRA for the first time.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR NEW IIS MANAGERS

As part of AIRA's Cooperative Agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention AIRA has a Goal to develop and provide an infrastructure for ongoing IIS peer-to-peer support, mentoring and specialized assistance. In 2014 AIRA will be offering a new set of technical assistance opportunities to the IIS community. These opportunities will include monthly 'discovery sessions' which will review topic areas relevant for all IIS Managers but will specifically target new IIS Managers and staff. The schedule for the first quarter of 2014 will be sent out shortly. Additionally AIRA will start establishing a mentorship program which will match new IIS Managers with more experiences IIS Managers. We strongly encourage you to attend these sessions or have the appropriate staff attend.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES SOCIETY OF AMERICA (ISDA) PROJECT TO INVESTIGATE BARRIERS TO PROVIDER USE OF IIS FOR ADULT IMMUNIZATION

AIRA is collaborating with ISDA on a project to increase adult participation and provider utilization of IIS and to ultimately increase and improve adult immunization practice. In order to meet this goal, ISDA wants to develop a better understanding of what interventions are most likely to increase utilization of IIS for adult immunizations. Studies exploring the barriers cited by private providers for not employing IIS for childhood immunizations have been conducted. Although it is likely that many of the same barriers impact adult immunization information data submission and access, more research is needed. ISDA plans to analyze existing literature on adult immunization and IIS, and conduct a limited number of interviews with state/regional IIS. They are also considering conducting a survey of adult immunization providers. To learn more about this project contact Alison Chi, AIRA Program Manager.

NATIONAL VACCINE PROGRAM OFFICE (NVPO) FOCUS GROUP

The Department of Health and Human Services NVPO is supporting the development of a strategic plan to strengthen adult immunization in the U.S. As a key stakeholder, AIRA has been invited to participate in a focus group on this topic. Focus group participants play a critical

role in this process because they will select and prioritize focus areas for the plan. The plan will identify innovative strategies to improve vaccination coverage and performance among adults, consistent with Healthy People 2020 Goals to optimally protect adults from infectious disease.

NOVEMBER RECAP

Assessment Steering Committee
- The ASC met on November 5th, 2013. The University of Michigan presented preliminary findings from the survey they are currently conducting on behalf of AIRA to learn about IIS-based assessment practices. As of this report, University of Michigan had received information from 50 IIS representing 41 states, 5 territories and 4 cities. All major geographic regions and platforms are represented.
- The committee also continued discussing the data quality assessment project and the development of an assessment tool.

Standards and Interoperability Steering Committee
- The SISC met on November 13th, 2013. The committee discussed priorities for 2014, continued review of updated ACK specifications, discussed inclusion of IN1 in the HL7 Implementation Guide (IG), and discussed NDC promotion.
- The SISC will be scheduling additional ad-hoc meetings in December to review the entire IG update. If you are interested in participating in these ad-hoc session contact Alison Chi for meeting details.

Education Steering Committee
- The ESC met on November 20th, 2013. Committee members discussed the next issue of SnapShots, which will focus on AIRA national meeting highlights, the AIRA Strategic Plan, and the many exciting projects that are being conducted by AIRA and AIRA partners.
- The Provider Training Workgroup is working on a new training resource page for the AIRA website. The workgroup is also planning a webinar to promote use of training metrics by IIS trainers which will be offered sometime in the spring of 2014.
- ESC members also planned for upcoming AIRA educational webinars. The next webinar will be held on Tuesday, December 17th from 3 – 4pm ET. The topic is Standards Harmonization.

MIROW Steering Committee
- The MIROW Steering Committee met on November 21st, 2013. The committee discussed the ongoing evaluation of the MIROW guides and the in-depth interviews with IIS.
- The committee also discussed topics for the next MIROW chapter.
- Committee members continued discussed of the current small-scale (micro) MIROW topic: Validating and "Cleaning" Lot Numbers.