

Enrollment Workgroup
Draft Transcript
July 2, 2010

Presentation

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Good morning and welcome, everybody, to the enrollment workgroup. This is a federal advisory committee. The public are listening in, and there will be opportunity at the end of the call for the public to make comments. Let me do a quick roll call. Sam Karp?

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Here.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Paul Egerman?

Paul Egerman – eScription – CEO

Here.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Cris Ross?

Cris Ross – LabHub – CIO

Here.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Jim Borland? Jessica Shahin? Stacy Dean? Steve Fletcher?

Steve Fletcher – State of Utah – Chief Information Officer

Here.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Reed Tuckson? Wes Rishel? Ronan Rooney? Robert Restuccia?

Rob Restuccia – Community Catalyst – Executive Director

Here.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Ray Baxter? Deborah Bachrach?

Deborah Bachrach – Bachrach Health Strategies – President

Here.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Gopal Khanna?

M

...is here on his behalf.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

That's right. I'm sorry. Thank you. Bill Oakes? Ruth Kennedy?

Ruth Kennedy – Louisiana Medicaid Department LaCHIP – Director

Here.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Anne Castro?

Dorothy – BlueCross BlueShield South Carolina

I'm here, Dorothy here on her behalf. She'll be joining in a minute.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Right. Thanks, Dorothy. Oren Michels? Bill Fritz-Chivalry?

Bill Fritz-Chivalry

Here.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Terri Shaw?

Terri Shaw – Children's Partnership – Deputy Director

Here.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Sallie Milam? Dave Molchany?

David Molchany – Fairfax County, VA – Deputy County Executive

Here.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Elizabeth ...? Bryan Sivak? Sharon Parrott? Nancy DeLew? Gary Glickman? John Galloway? Donna Schmidt? Dave Hale?

David Hale – NLM NIH – Project Manager for Pillbox

Here.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Paul Swanenburg?

Paul Swanenburg – SSA – Senior IT Specialist & Program Manager

Here.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Dave Hansell? Julie Rushin?

Gina Garza – IRS – Associate CIO, Applications Development

This is Gina Garza for Julie Rushin.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Right. Hello, Gina. Sorry. Chris Tem? Penny Thompson? Henry Chao? Has Aneesh joined yet? I think he might be late coming in. Did I leave anybody off?

Elizabeth Royal – SEIU – Political Coordinator

Elizabeth Royal.

Oren Michels – Mashery – CEO

You probably called my name already. I just got on the line. Oren Michels.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Oren, right. Who else? Elizabeth?

Elizabeth Royal – SEIU – Political Coordinator

Royal.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

That's right. Sorry.

Bill Oakes – City of Boston – Chief Information Officer

And Bill Oakes from the city of Boston.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Thanks, Bill.

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

And Ronan Rooney from Curam.

Jim Borland – SSA – Special Advisor for Health IT, Office of the Commissioner

Judy, this is Jim Borland from SSA. I'm on.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Good. Great.

John Roessler – USCIS DHS – Chief SAFE Program

And this is John Roessler with the USCIS DHS on the line.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Right. Thank you, John.

Lisa Pino – USDA – Deputy Administrator, SNAP

Hello. This is Lisa Pino from the Food and Nutrition Service at USDA.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Great. Thank you.

Greg Powell – USCIS OIT – Contact Point

This is Greg Powell from USCIS OIT Office.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Great. Thank you.

Rose Trasatti – NAPHSIS – Project Manager

This is Rose Trasatti from NAPHSIS.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Right. Rose and Kim Nazi are on, I'm sure, and Garland Land. All right. With that, I'll turn it over to Sam.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Good morning, everyone. On behalf of Aneesh and myself, I want to welcome you to the third enrollment workgroup meeting. Let me start by just thanking everyone for this huge commitment of time to help us get through this process. Today's session is for three hours, and our meeting objective today is to really get into the topic of verification interfaces. And, as an objective, we hope, by the end of today's session, that we will have begun to outline initial standards and protocol recommendations for verification. We're going to approach it initially in two different ways. The first is that we're going to review work that staff and consultants have done to get a high level look at the existing interfaces that are in use and, where possible, see what they suggest to us about any default standards.

And, secondly, mostly in the panel discussion that we're going to have, we're going to hope to define the requirements of what would be much more modern interfaces than what's at play today. And we're going to look at Web services and real time exchanges, the ability, as is required in the Affordable Care Act to be able to reuse information. Hopefully ways in which we can reduce the complexity and time and expense of setting up and using interfaces. And we're also going to explore, as an option, what we might be able to do around consumer-mediated verifications.

The agenda for today, and because of availability, we're going to start off with testimony from folks from the VA about their Blue Button initiative. Then I'm going to walk us quickly through the summary of the existing verification federal interfaces that we've looked at and try to sum up what we've learned in that review. Then we're going to hear direct testimony about the interfaces that are used at Department of Homeland Security and EVVES. Then Aneesh will hopefully join us by then, and is going to....

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

I'm here.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Good. Hello, Aneesh. And lead us through a panel discussion. Out of the panel discussion, that's where we hope to begin to outline the initial recommendations. Then Claudia will come down and talk to us about next steps from subcommittees, working groups that we're setting up, and the time and schedule for the next meeting. Aneesh, anything to add?

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

No. This is an exciting moment, and thanks, everyone, to join on the July 4th weekend, but thank you.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Good. Again, focus for today and now moving to slide five is on verification interfaces. You'll remember from our last discussion, we took a look at what we thought would be the base use case. And, as we described at the time, this use case could be applied against a variety of scenarios, whether it would be an exchange portal, whether it would be a Medicaid or TANF or SNAP food stamps portal, or whether we had some combined use of exchange and the various federal programs. But this again focuses retrieving

electronic verification information from outside sources and the standards that are needed to do that, moving now to slide six.

The first approach was, as I said a moment ago, we've asked consultants and staff to look at the standards that are in place today at the federal level and some of the federally required state of interfaces. How widely are they used, for what kind of information? How do they work? How many of them actually operate in a batch mode or in a query lookup mode or real time? What, if any, standards are used? What, if any, information is ... messaged back, and what limitations exist on the use or reuse of that information? Then, as I said, we're going to spend time in the latter part of the meeting defining what we think are the requirements for modernizing.

The two overall approaches that we want to look at on slide seven are a consumer mediated model, much like we heard about in testimony from the IRS SASA experience where consumers control the verification process. In other words, they request their own data. The effect of this is that it puts the consumer in control of the information. It could avoid the time-consuming process of developing use agreements. It allows the consumer to decide how and when they want to manage their own information and where it could be reused. It raises some questions about how this model would work, how we deal with authentication, ID resolution, what level of security would be needed, and how we avoid placing too much burden on the consumer, or at least trying to assess what kind of burden this places on the consumer.

The second approach is a more common approach that's used today. The business-to-business, B2B, much like we heard Paul describe about the SSA model. It's the predominant model today where agencies largely control the verification process. This process is supported by legal agreements between organizations. They generally limit the reuse and have very specific restrictions on use of the data outside of the purpose of the agreement. And in this case, largely the system takes the burden off the individual, and assumes the burden itself for doing the verification. That's kind of the overview of what we're going to be looking at.

I assume we have Kim and Peter on the call now.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Kim is there.

Peter Levin – Department of Veterans Affairs – CTO

And is Peter.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Good. Terrific. Welcome. Why don't we turn it over to you? I believe there was a PowerPoint deck that was sent out. Did people get that?

W

Yes.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

It was distributed.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Good, it was distributed, so people can pull that up. Welcome, and why don't you take it away?

Kim Nazi – VA – FACHE, Management Analyst

Good morning. This is Kim Nazi with the Department of Veterans Affairs. I want to thank the workgroup for the opportunity to provide some testimony for you today. I'd like to begin with some opening comments, and then I will reference the PowerPoint slides. We put together a brief deck for you this morning, and I'll call those out by slide number, and Alison will be able to advance slides in the medium.

We recognize that this is really a historic moment in our nation's history, and with healthcare reform, we anticipate having tens of millions of new enrollees, on top of the hundreds of millions already covered by our healthcare system. And this, coupled with meaningful use, of course, is really an important opportunity to rethink our expectations of electronic health records and personal health records and how to make them safe, more convenient and, of course, interoperable. So one approach that we've been taking at VA is based on our personal health record, My Health Vet.

Our goal, of course, is to have a very simple model for secure, validated, and reusable data to support consumers. One of the challenges we face until now, of course, is that software systems often require expensive and cumbersome upgrades to meet emerging functionality and are often based on proprietary systems, and so, as you're aware, the public sector, of course, comes to this challenge with finite resources, and it's difficult to enact change. Because of that, we've created a model that I'm going to describe for you this morning, and the model really welcomes standards based modular components, the goal of which are that they are easy to read, easy to use, and easy to connect to other systems. The Blue Button initiative is such a model, and I'd like to reference the slides next to really give you a sense for the genesis of the Blue Button and why it's important to us and to the veterans that we serve. In the next ten minutes, I'll go through the slide deck with you, and then I'd be happy to answer any questions that you have.

On slide two, I'd like to begin by giving you some context for the Blue Button, and many have asked, of course, why the term Blue Button, so I'll also give you a sense for that. The Blue Button concept really emerged back in January in New York City. VA and CMS and several federal agencies were welcomed to join a meeting of the Markle Foundation consumer engagement workgroup. The dialog around the table was really very much focused on how to best provide consumers with electronic access to their health information data. As a result of that discussion, we also anticipated that not only is it important to provide direct access to consumers to their personal health information, but also to, in the longer term, incent market innovation to really create health information technology exchange solutions to be able to enable reusable data, but really to also provide to consumers additional value added health IT applications that would create actionable information for them to act upon.

The breakthrough idea that emerged at this meeting was really the result of a very engaging dialog around the table, and the voices around the table were in consensus that one important opportunity would be to simply provide consumers with electronic access to their data by adding a button to some of the large provider portals that we have. For example with VA, we have the My Healthy Vet personal health record. The goal would be to add a button to enable consumers not only to view their personal health information, but also to be able to easily download an electronic copy of that information for their own use or for use in other systems. So the voices around the table really said, you know, add a download button. Just add a big Blue Button on these portals, and that will lead to system transformation, so that's the genesis of the Blue Button.

Following that meeting, we partnered with our colleagues at CMS and HHS to create an opportunity to share some sample data sets with the public and to host a virtual meeting where we could provide, in the spirit of open government, some demonstrations of the portals, the mymedicare.gov portal for CMS, and the My Healthy Vet personal health record portal for VA. This was really facilitated by the chief

technology office, Dr. Peter Levin, of the VA, and Dr. Todd Park, of course, of HHS. And, really, this whole project is being successfully driven by their leadership and their vision for this project. They are continuously reminding us to keep it simple and practical, and to, of course, make it happen. On slide two, if you're interested in taking a look at some of the background materials for that virtual meeting, I've included a link to the meeting site. You can actually also take a look at the same data sets.

On slide three, of course, there are really multiple converging drivers moving towards this kind of transformative idea. With the Recovery Act, in the spirit of meaningful use, the expectation has been set that consumers will have easy access to obtain electronic copies of their pertinent health information about themselves. Also, with the investments being made by the federal government and, of course, the private sector, it's really very much about improving healthcare quality and efficiency, enhancing safety, and promoting patient engagement in their healthcare while, of course, protecting security and privacy. These drivers are really leading us to an important pivotal point. We urgently need a simple and effective way for individuals to gain access to their health information electronically, either for their own use or for their use in other systems or other health information technology applications.

On slide four, you'll see the Blue Button. The My Healthy Vet personal health record portal today serves more than one million registered users. The most popular application in the portal today has been the ability to request online prescription refills. And since we added that functionality back in August of 2005, we've actually refilled more than 15.4 million prescriptions for our veterans. The portal is available at www.myhealth.va.gov, and conceptually it really provides an important platform on which we can add a Blue Button to the portal and really lead to a lot of systems transformation.

On slide five, you'll see our plan for implementing the Blue Button, and we've broken this out into phases. Phase one, which we are targeting for this month, is to demonstrate the capability by developing a prototype of the Blue Button using basically the data that's currently available through the My Healthy Vet personal health record. That data is a combination of extracts from the electronic health record, but also personal health summary based on patient self-entered data.

As part of our demonstration project in the virtual meeting, we made both kinds of data available to the public to really share some of the information that's available in terms of data classes, but to also demonstrate really the power that's behind combining not only electronic health record data, but data that patients may record and document and maintain themselves. So we're targeting this phase of demonstration for phase one. Pretty quickly, in August, we will be moving to deploy the Blue Button within the My Healthy Vet portal, and this national deployment has several important elements. Not only us there, of course, a technical component, but also there's an interface component, and there's several policy components that I'll share with you next.

Phase three of the Blue Button initiative for VA, we're targeting currently for December of this year. And the goal for phase three will be to expand upon the kinds of data that's available for electronic download. We'll be looking to supplement the phase one content with additional extracts of electronic health record data. And this capability will be based on analysis of the current VistA data classes and really prioritizing that so that we can provide as much data to veterans through the Blue Button capability as possible.

Looking forward in a little bit of a longer-term goal, phase four is really focused on enabling the capability to be able to share that data. So our goal for phase four would be to provide, as part of the NHIN, a Nationwide Health Information Network compliant document to enable consumers to be able to not only use their electronic data, but to also have opportunities to use that data with other systems and applications. Of course, as part of this initiative throughout, we anticipate ongoing evaluation to really

determine the impact of this functionality on things like health outcomes. Those are the four phases for VA to get to implementing the Blue Button.

Next, I'd like to just share with you not only what some of the technical requirements are to drive this forward, but also what some of the business and policy implications are. On slide six, of course the goal is really to provide information in a human readable format so that not only can consumers view a full copy of their electronic health data, but also be able to print that for their use and to be able to save that file so that they can keep that file, but also really reuse that data within other systems. Because of that, it will be an important requirement that that data is also able to be exported into, you know, commonly used software formats such as spreadsheets and other formats.

As part of this, from a policy perspective, we really need to attend to addressing some of the policy requirements for individual authorization for collections, use, and disclosure of information, and working hand-in-hand with our colleagues at the Markle Foundation, as well as our other federal agency partners, we will enact some of these policy requirements so that as we go forward with this exciting idea, we're also doing so in a way that really places focus on insuring that we're meeting the important needs of consumers. For example, one of those policy implications, of course, is that all activity would be tracked in immutable audit trail so that not only do we have an account activity log for activity within the personal health record portal today, but it would be an important requirement to also be able to track any transactions that occur from the Blue Button in terms of download activity. So that's one working example of a requirement that's really driven by policy.

Another important requirement emerging from this facilitated work from the Markle Foundation is really to support consumers in making informed choices. As part of the interface requirements, not only will there be an interface to easily download an electronic copy, but also some strong links to further support informing consumers about the potential benefits and risks, and really to engage and educate them about safe information management practices. For example, if a veteran logs into the My Healthy Vet portal and pressed the blue download button to obtain an electronic copy of their health information, we also want them to be informed and educated about safe information management practices, especially if they're using a public computer. So it's a combination of leveraging the identity management aspects that exist today within the My Healthy Vet personal health record environment, adding functionality to that, and also combining that with the kinds of tools and resources that consumers can access so that they are informed consumers.

Thinking again in the longer term about where this transformation will lead us, not only do we anticipate that consumers will want to be able to download an electronic copy for their own use, but thinking ahead to the kinds of agreements that technology could bring functionality to, to take a systems approach to really think about separating the pathways so that the system can identify if this is a consumer downloading an electronic copy for their own use or whether they are enabling more of an automated process for that download to occur with their consent on their behalf. We see this as an important contribution. It's really a combination in terms of requirements development of not just the technical requirements, but also, of course, the policy requirements and the business requirements all driving towards the Blue Button functionality, which is really to make it simple, make it easy to use, make it effective and, of course, practical.

I'd like to conclude with why this is so important and what we anticipate as the outcomes. We see Blue Button as an important opportunity to improve the quality and accessibility of information to veterans. We also anticipate that like personal health record use, this will have some really rich potential to improve access to systems, improve quality of outcomes and, of course, improve system efficiency. Our

evaluation component, of course, will be very much tied to taking a scientifically rigorous approach to evaluate that.

Secondly, we really want to think not only in the short-term, but also in the longer-term, and build a sustainable, extensible, collaborative approach with capacity and tools to really deliver this information to veterans for their own use or their use in other systems. As part of this, we've had some great opportunities to collaborate with HHS and ONC and CMS, and we see that continuing. We also plan to continue to collaborate with our partners at DoD, and I think this is also an amazing opportunity to foster cross-agency collaboration in that spirit.

Really, the overarching goal is to enable a model rethinking some of the traditional models of electronic health record systems, and this model is really one that welcomes standards based modular components that are easy to read, easy to use, and easy to connect to other systems so that it's not dependent upon the current state or the short-term, but really can be adapted as the market moves forward. So we have this platform, My Healthy Vet. We have some important and aggressive timelines that we are working to meet. Again, I want to thank Dr. Levin for his superb leadership and vision for this project. It's certainly helped us to not only have a sense for some of the challenges, but to really overcome those challenges. That concludes my comments this morning, and I'm happy to respond to any questions the workgroup may have about the Blue Button.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Thanks, Kim. Dr. Levin, were you going to comment as well?

Peter Levin – Department of Veterans Affairs – CTO

Just to say thank you to everyone for inviting us and for inviting me to this discussion. I think Kim did a great job in representing what we're about and the aggressive timeline that I've asked the team to hit with deliveries this month and next month, and also to express the appreciation for the close cooperation with Todd, Aneesh, and our other federal partners. I'll be standing by to help answer questions, but I want to thank Kim for really representing us well on this call.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Good. We'll turn to questions in a second, but I understand that we have Lorraine Doo on the phone who is from the Office of eHealth Standards and Services at CMS that partner with VA on this. Lorraine?

Lorraine Doo – CMS – Sr. Policy Advisory Office eHealth Standards & Services

Yes. I'm here. Good morning. Did you want me to talk about what CMS is doing with Blue Button?

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Yes, please.

Lorraine Doo – CMS – Sr. Policy Advisory Office eHealth Standards & Services

All right. I'd be happy to. I wanted to say hello to Kim because we did do a lot of work on putting this out when we did, our virtual meeting in May. CMS is a little bit different than VA in that we have claims information for the Medicare beneficiaries because we obviously do claims processing, and we're not a medical system. And so the information that beneficiaries have access to today is on mymedicare.gov. And they can actually go online. They register through a secure system. They can see much of the information that they would see on a claim.

We do not share the diagnosis, but there are procedures and other general information that would be off a claim. They can see that and they can print something called an on-the-go report, which will also

include information that they may have self-entered about their own self-reported medical conditions, allergies, devices, and if they want to put in information about medications that they might be taking that have helped them select a Part D pharmacy plan, so there are some additional self-entered information. With the combination of the claims information and the self-entered, they can produce their on-the-go report. And so, as we moved towards the concept of a Blue Button, they will now be able to actually download that information in a CSV or an Excel file into their own computer and then upload that same information into a PHR that they either have and that has said we are capable of taking in this data and absorbing it into our tools and then providing the additional value add that many PHRs have. So it is, for a beneficiary, a two-step process because they need to download the information, have it in their computer, and then find a PHR that is able to actually then upload or import that information.

For us, some of the policy decisions after we go through evaluating it is how to enable beneficiaries to select a PHR and understand what the PHR tools can do, what they're actually looking for in that kind of a tool. And very importantly is what the implications are of downloading data into their own personal computer because, once it leaves CMS's hands, we are not able to provide the same kinds of security protections, and so we want to make sure, in our messaging, that we have information that is very readable to help them understand if you download this information, make sure you do the following to insure its protection. That's a piece that we are working through, as we develop the program to launch ours, which will also be in the fall. And before we move into a phase two or a phase three, we are actually going to try to understand how many people are doing it, how many people are downloading their information, and we'll have to work on ways of obtaining that information since it's not part of a survey that we're currently doing.

But to give you an idea of what the volumes are of people who are actually using mymedicare.gov, right now whenever a new Medicare beneficiary comes onboard to Medicare, they are actually automatically registered to mymedicare.gov, and they are sent a letter that says you're going to be able to access your information online, and you can set up a user ID and password. And so the volume of "registered" users is actually about ten million people. Now in terms of folks who have then chosen to log in and use it, there were, and this was in May, 1.7 million people that had in fact logged in and looked at mymedicare.gov. So there are people truly using that tool, and so we can anticipate then that if we explain the Blue Button concept properly, and if we enable them to select a PHR, there may be a fair number of users. We certainly don't want to chase them away from mymedicare.gov because it's a very good tool, but it does not provide the level of service and the kinds of intelligent algorithms that a personal health record providers where there's more information that they can actually get from that. So we have to just oppose those two issues of helping people find personal health record tools, but also enabling them to continue to use mymedicare.gov for the benefits that it provides. That's where we are with the CMS Blue Button.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Good. Thank you, Lorraine. Questions from our committee members for Kim, Peter, or Lorraine?

David Molchany – Fairfax County, VA – Deputy County Executive

Yes. I have one question. This is Dave Molchany. My question is, I think we understand that when the data resides with CMS, it's protected. I think I also understand that once it gets to your personal computer, it's really up to you to make sure you protect it. But in the transport, what kind of technology are you using to protect the data as it flows from CMS to the customer?

Lorraine Doo – CMS – Sr. Policy Advisory Office eHealth Standards & Services

That is a good question. I do not know how that data transport works actually. I can find out from the technology people. All I know is what the file is, but I do not know the technology. I don't know if Henry is on, who would be able to answer that.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Yes. This is Henry. It's typically secured through TLS, so it's downloaded from the Web site, which is typically the PHR vendor, and the standard that we asked them to use is a TLS.

Lorraine Doo – CMS – Sr. Policy Advisory Office eHealth Standards & Services

Henry, this is for when it goes – it's just a CSV file that's going for the Blue Button. It's not actually going to a vendor.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Yes, that also applies too. TLS is the normal standard.

Reed Tuckson – UnitedHealth Group – EVP & Chief of Medical Affairs

This is Reed Tuckson, a member of the committee also, and let me just ask you to continue on that. First of all, this is encouraging what you have described you're able to do, and so the challenge for our committee is sort of to understand more of the secret sauce underneath of it. How have you, from a technology point of view, in terms of both the CMS program and the VA program, are you dealing with – you're dealing with databases that are outside of only your own discrete organization. And so the question becomes, have you sort of found a technology, secret sauce that allows you to be able to connect and important information, let's just say if it's about the identification of the unique person? Have you been able to sort of solve for making sure that the data that you get from places about veteran Bobby Smith, that's actually Bobby Smith?

Lorraine Doo – CMS – Sr. Policy Advisory Office eHealth Standards & Services

That's for Kim.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Kim, would you like to say something?

Kim Nazi – VA – FACHE, Management Analyst

Sure. I can tell you a little bit about our identity management practices for My Healthy Vet, and then try to address your question. Today we have a three-tier access model. Anyone can visit this site and access the health education materials on My Healthy Vet site. The second tier would be a user can create their own user name and password, and that provides them with a personal health record that they can then self-enter into. The last tier is what we've called in person authentication, and that would require a one-time visit to a local facility. And at the time of that visit, there's some, as per regulation, there is some release of information form that gets signed by the veteran. We provide them with educational materials about safeguarding their information. And when that occurs, that one-time, in person photo validated visit, that's the moment at which their identity as a My Healthy Vet registrant is matched to our master patient index and synchronized with their electronic identity within the organization as a VA patient.

Currently, we have this one-time, in person authentication. At that moment, we synchronize with our master patient index, and it really lines up their My Health Vet account with their electronic identity within our electronic health record system, and that's really an important step to enable the flow of extracts from the electronic health record into their My Healthy Vet portal. From a technology perspective, of course, that occurs in a secure environment. Today, we don't accept electronic imports from either organizational system. That's certainly something that we see the benefit of and have in the queue for further

development. But we're also looking at some of the health information exchanges as potential gateways or platforms. For example, with the VA data available in the Nationwide Health Information Network in a secure environment, we would also, in the spirit of Markle's perspective, foresee options for having sort of a consumer gateway to some of that data. I hope that answered your question.

Claudia Williams – Markle Foundation – Director Health Policy & Public Affairs

Kim, this is Claudia. Just one follow-on to that. Once that synching has occurred, is there additional authentication? Do you still use the user name and password as the basic authentication for the user, or is there a stricter requirement?

Kim Nazi – VA – FACHE, Management Analyst

Yes. Today that's managed by strong user name and password combinations in a secure environment. And with the ability to view the data in the browser, that places – the difference between data sort of in the electronic health record and the personal health record is once the data is within the PHR, it's owned, managed, and controlled by the veteran. For us, the ability to view the data in the browser has already passed that gateway. Now with Blue Button functionality, if the veteran were not only able to view it, but to download an electronic copy of that data, that would be within the authorization because they've already had identity management performed, and they already have access to view their data. Does that make sense?

Claudia Williams – Markle Foundation – Director Health Policy & Public Affairs

Yes. Thanks.

Paul Egerman – eScription – CEO

Kim, this is Paul Egerman.

Kim Nazi – VA – FACHE, Management Analyst

Good morning.

Paul Egerman – eScription – CEO

This is very helpful and very interesting, so thank you for your entire presentation. Following up on this issue of individual authorization, that's an area that ONC is currently looking at, as it relates to healthcare information exchange, and we just heard some comments about CMS having some sort of secured registration process. And so my question is, has there been any effort to coordinate among the VA and CMS and ONC on this very issue of individual authorization?

Kim Nazi – VA – FACHE, Management Analyst

Yes. Thank you for that question. We definitely are around the table in partnership with HHS and ONC. I think, in terms of this in person authentication process, I mentioned that we have one million registered users. We have currently today about 199,000 veterans who have undergone that in person authentication process.

One of the tipping points that we would look forward to is examining secure methods for enabling perhaps an online authentication method. We would want to do that to be consistent with our federal agency partners, and so, yes, I think we are heavily engaged in those workgroups and discussions. And I think we can bring forward our experiences with in person authentication and some of the challenges it presents. I know that we are very interested in piloting an online authentication method, and certainly that would be best done in partnership so that we could have a consistent mechanism across governments.

Paul Egerman – eScription – CEO

That's very helpful, and it seems like you're ahead of us or ahead of the ONC people in terms of what you have operational and, unfortunately, I haven't heard this before, and so I wanted to make sure we take advantage of what you've learned.

Peter Levin – Department of Veterans Affairs – CTO

We're not as far ahead of you as you think, although I'm happy if you believe that we are. Probably we should take this part of the conversation offline. We can read you in there, but certainly ONC is keenly aware of what we're doing.

Paul Egerman – eScription – CEO

Terrific.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Any other burning questions? We're going to try to move the agenda. On behalf of the committee, let me thank Kim, Peter, and Lorraine. Very interesting, and as we think about a consumer mediated model, you've given us a pretty good example about how it could work, particularly as you move to being able to do the online verification.

Is it correct to assume that the 199,000 people who have actually come in, veterans who have come in, that that happened on just normal visits that they have and, as veterans come in, they have the opportunity and are presented with the opportunity to sign up to this and be verified?

Kim Nazi – VA – FACHE, Management Analyst

That's another great question. Yes. What we are really trying to do is build this into our system so that, for example, if a veteran is coming in for their appointment that represents a touch point for us, we would seek to make it as efficient as possible. And while they're at one of our sites of care, be able to also accomplish in person authentication. We also are building that into our business processes so, for example, one touch point that we have with veterans is for them to come on in and get a new ID card, so we partner with that part of the organization so that as they're there, we also have that opportunity and touch point with them to accomplish in person authentication easily.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Good. Again, thank you very much.

Kim Nazi – VA – FACHE, Management Analyst

Thank you very much.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

I'm going to now walk us through the next dozen slides pretty quickly. You can read them, as well as I can read them to you, but we want to get through them, and I'm going to ask that you jot down any questions that you have about any of the particular verification sources because we have representatives from IRS, SSA, DHS, and EVVES here for the panel discussion. It'll be an opportunity to get clarification or answers to the questions.

We're going to start on slide ten, and we're approaching this in two ways. First, what are the verification services that are required by the Affordable Care Act? Secondly, what are some of the other national verification interfaces that are available and currently in use? We've done, as I said before, a very high level inventory of them looking at their use and their capabilities.

What are the verification sources, on the next slide, that ACA requires? There are three. Section 1411 requires individuals for the exchange be verified through the IRS for income and also family size for Homeland Security, DHS, for legal residents, and for Social Security Administration for citizenship or immigration status. And if you move to the next slide, 12, we've looked at what are the various elements that are contained within each of these verification processes? You can see that there are three that are highlighted in red faced type, and what we say about that is that there's little information available on what's the accuracy threshold that's required, what information, if any, is message back, and how is the security and access question handled, so those are things that we can delve into.

Let's take a look at just, again, at a high level of these three verification sources that are required by the ACA. Turning to slide 13, there's the IRS verification. All states have an IRS look up that's called the Beneficiary Earnings Exchange Record System or BEERS. It verifies W-2 income and other tax return data. The interface is an online lookup that requires typing in, entering in the data once pulled from IRS back into a state eligibility system. Data sharing, written data sharing agreements are required. The information is not released directly to the consumer. And the matches made on names, social security numbers, federal tax ID number, and users report that the data is often outdated or certainly not current. This is critically important in the context of the ACA under the modified adjusted gross income requirements that the data be more current, so we'll hear from the IRS about that.

If we move to slide 14, the Homeland Security, VHS, this is the eVerify, which they do in service, verification service, which is in partnership with SSA. It is voluntary for most employers, but it's mandatory for some employers, particularly those with federal contractors or subcontractors. It verifies immigration status. The interface is an online lookup, data sharing agreements, again, required. Information not released to the consumer. Users report there is a charge for transaction. I think we need to get clarification from DHS about that. I've actually seen on their Web site that there is no charge, so that would be helpful.

There's also the SAVE systems that DHS operates, which is another voluntary system. It's designed to support federal, state, or local benefit granting agencies to help determine immigrant status. And I assume that the data sources for SAVE and for eVerify are the same, but that's something we'll have to clarify. And then the third interface that's required, verification interface, is Social Security Administration. We heard from Paul Swanenburg, who is going to be with us again today, that all states receive this now. There are 28 states using SSA for verification match of citizenship through the Children's Health Insurance Program under the new CHIPRA law. It verifies name, date of birth, social security number, program benefit status, quarterly earnings, retirement payments, etc.

There are two interface options. One is a batch file, which is largely used. As Paul reported last time, there's also a state online query. Data sharing agreements, again, required, information not released to the consumer, direct match on date of birth, gender, name, social security number. We've heard from states that they have generally favorable experience using it. Some states are still monitoring. I think Paul said there are 28 states, and if I remember correctly, there was a 94% matched rate that was being experienced. Those are the three main verification systems that are required by the ACA. We have a summary table I'll get to in a minute that shows what elements that are actually covered by these three interfaces.

The next slide is staff put together a workflow slide that suggests that much of this work is done manually. There is applications entered either on paper or through an interview, through phone or an online system, but then the eligibility worker has to essentially do the query and do a manual record of the results of that query. In the process of doing that, they try to perfect the match if there's no match that's available. If a match is available, they'll do the data entry. If no match is available, they'll do a discrepancy report and

the individuals in the agency will then try to follow up with the individual and then begin to repeat that process, so again, largely a manual process.

Let me walk you through just the next few slides, which again are other national verification interfaces. These are ones that are not required, but in some instances we may want to rely on them. The electronic verification vital event system, EVVES, used in 24 states, verifies birth and death record interfaces and online lookup. Data sharing agreement required, information not released to the consumer, kind of a pattern here, direct match on name, date of birth, gender. Users report there's a cost associated structure. Some states say it's too expensive to be effective for them.

On slide 19, the public assistance reporting information system, PARIS, this is administered by the Administration for Children and Families, ACF, within HHS. It's used by public assistance agencies in all states with the exception of Hawaii. It relies on three sources for its information. It does a VA and a DoD match to identify active or retired military of federal employees. And then it also does an interstate match, which looks for duplicate payments made to the same person in more than one state. It allows programs to exchange previous quarter eligibility files for TANF, SNAP, food stamps, and Medicaid. Again, the data sharing agreements are required, information not shared with the consumer. Data elements that are used for the match are name, date of birth, social security. User experience are generally favorable.

And then the last database verification system that we want to highlight for you is IEVS, income eligibility verification system. This is required by the federal government for all states. It verifies income, assets, program eligibility, interfaces batch or online lookup. Data sharing agreements required. Release of information to consumers controlled by individual state policy. Again, it does a direct match on name, date of birth, gender, social security. It's a roles-based security.

And if we look at then the summary tables on slide 21 and 22, if you look at the first columns, the first three columns on the left, these are the Affordability Care Act required verification, and it looks like between the three of them, they cover age, citizenship, immigration status, family size, and dependants. Then there's a gap here on residency. This is not legal residency. This is more physical residency. But if you look all the way over to the right, you see that each of the required state systems addresses state residency, where you live, physical address. So most of the elements are covered in the first three verification systems. Questions here about actual residency.

Then the last table is looking at the verification methods and the key data elements. We see for the verification methods, it's largely just as I've described in each of them, online queries, batch mode, and some customized interface. As far as I can tell from any of these, even though there may be existing capabilities that aren't used, there aren't any real time verification processes that are apparent so far. And in terms of the data use to match the records, it's largely the same: name, date of birth, social security or equivalent. We have some gaps here under the Department of Homeland Security. I'm not sure why, but we'll raise those questions with them.

The last slide, and sorry to move through this so quickly, but I want to get us to the discussion, the overall finding is that there are few standards in use. There are some tailored interfaces that are supported by specific use agreements, but as I said a moment ago, most of the information shared on a batch mode basis or through queries, lookups against the portals, matching occurs largely on name, date of birth, social security number. Across the systems, it's not clear that there's any standard of matching threshold that's in use and, as a rule, based on the information use agreement, information is not shared with consumers. And, in fact, those same agreements provide restrictions on use for other purposes and also reuse, especially to determine eligibility for non-federal programs. I suspect that's true in most cases for reuse for other existing federal programs, although I suspect they differ between the verification services.

Unless there are any burning questions about this overview, I want to move us, and let me just ask. Are there any burning questions, or can they be held until we get to the panel? Good. Hearing none, let me turn it over to Claudia Williams, who will introduce the testimony that we have from DHS and from EVVES. Claudia?

Claudia Williams – ONC

Thank you, Sam. From DHS and just a point of clarification, the ACA requires three interfaces, and there's some specificity in the Act about what those are and how they are to be stood up. So for each of the agencies, they will be, you know, depending on their great experience in the past, setting up interfaces, but the expectation is that they'll need to be – there's an opportunity to create a new interface that may operate in a different way than the ones they've had in the past. So right now, in the last set of meetings, we heard from the IRS about their FASMA experience, and we also heard from the SSA, and we'll get those perspectives back again in the panel.

But the third entity that's called out in the ACA, DHS, we are delighted that folks are on the call today, and I just want to clarify. I think we have both Greg and John on the line. Is one of you going to be able to give us a brief overview?

John Roessler – USCIS DHS – Chief SAFE Program

This is John. I can give you an overview.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Great. Then after that, we'll have Rose Trasatti speaking about the EVVES verification interface, but, John, if you want to take it away.

John Roessler – USCIS DHS – Chief SAFE Program

Excellent. I just have a question before I start. Was there an opportunity for somebody to provide our slide deck to you? Do you happen to have that?

Claudia Williams – ONC

I don't think we received it.

John Roessler – USCIS DHS – Chief SAFE Program

Great. So what I'll do is try....

Claudia Williams – ONC

We would be happy to – if you want to speak from it, that would be great, and we can distribute it after the call to everyone on the line.

John Roessler – USCIS DHS – Chief SAFE Program

Excellent. First of all, I want to thank everyone for inviting us. This is a very interesting time in the nation with the healthcare and everything that is being passed right now. And I'd like to point out that verification is what I'm here to talk about today. We are embroiled in verification daily here in the USCIS around the immigrant population, and so we look forward to opening this up. We've been wondering how this is going to play out, so having an opportunity to come today and discuss how we can contribute to the effort is monumental for us actually. So I appreciate that, so thank you.

What I'll do is I'll start out by just talking a little bit. I notice some questions came up earlier in the earlier slide around DHS. We talked a little bit about e-Verify and SAVE. There are some differences there, I

believe, that it's important to understand upfront. This slide deck presented kind of a combined both concepts together. E-Verify is primarily used by employers to verify information presented from the I-9 document to determine the eligibility to work, so work eligibility is checked primarily in that program.

What the SAVE program is set up to do is to verify immigration status, so we cover a wider range of status for the population than just the employment eligibility, so that's a key indicator and also the information that's provided to the different systems is different as well. So an overview, I'm going to go through the SAVE program since I'm the chief of the SAVE program. That's my primary area of responsibility, so I'll cover that. And if there are any questions, or if we need to determine if e-Verify is a player, we can do that. But let me run through the overview of the program for you, and maybe I can address then some of the questions that were also provided to us before the workgroup started today.

The systematic alien verification for entitlements program was set up. It's intergovernmental. It's an initiative that's designed to aid the benefit granting agencies to determine an applicant's current immigration status. So what we try to do is insure that only entitled applicants then receive federal, state, and local public benefits and licenses. It was created initially under the Immigration Reform and Control Act in 1986. Then, over the years, different legislation has affected SAVE, including ... and now our participation in healthcare.

The SAVE program verifies nonimmigrant status, immigrant status and, in some cases, U.S. citizenship for the naturalized and derived citizens who are in our DHS system. It's important to note the SAVE, the program does not make a determination on an applicant's eligibility for a specific benefit, so we do not determine the eligibility for the benefit providing agency. We simply provide current immigration status back to the agency so they can determine the applicant's eligibility for the benefits.

The SAVE program currently has approximately 527 agencies across the U.S. and territories that we work with. There are 28 federal agencies. Some of them are represented here today: HHS, SSA. We have state agencies, and most of those are HHS, DoL (Department of Labor), and then we have local agencies for licensing when states pass laws in order to use our program. Also, we are used by the Department of Motor Vehicles. The different access methods that are available to SAVE are an Internet access method, what we call Web 3. It is a Web-based access. It provides a secure Internet access to the system using a Web browser such as Internet Explorer or NetScape.

We also offer Web services where the agencies can build out an interface to us and connect through a Web services interface depending on their needs and putting us into their mainframe or issuance system. It's also important to note that we do continue to modernize and run an operations and maintenance schedule here in customer service around our system. And the modernization effort in the future that we have is geared towards improving a customer experience, the data handling, the algorithms for the decision making process, and we are attempting to tailor this to the needs of our specific agencies and their benefit provision process.

There are agreements and controls in place. We, as described earlier, are a business-to-business model, so there are agreements and controls such as memorandums of agreement. We have some computer matching agreements and service level agreements depending on the relationship with the individual user. We put privacy protections in place within the agreement, within our systems. There are unique user IDs and passwords for system access. We limit disclosure to the agency and their trusted representatives. We hold them responsible and accountable for the use of the system, and we provide notice and interact with them on any issues that may arise in the system or any concerns from a customer service angle with the actual benefit applicant, their customer.

As far as the information that is input into our systems, the information is mainly derived from the documents that have been issued throughout DHS that we verify for immigration. For example, entry permits, permanent resident cards, refugee travel documents, etc ... for arrival departure data, so we collect numeric identifiers from these documents. We collected name, date of birth, and then the alien number and I-number or other unique identifiers on those documents in order to process the queries in the DHS system.

The verification process itself is a process that has redress built in, if you will. It's a three-step process, and what we do is we do an electronic interface because it takes about three to five seconds for the agency to get a response if we've identified the information that's been presented, and we present back to them the current status of the individual in the data system. If we're unable to determine at that time, we ask the agency to supply us some more information. Again, this is an electronic interface where they can take a next step, provide us additional information, and then we have a status verification office, several of them actually, set up where they will go in and look at this data to determine a response and send it back.

In some cases where it is difficult to determine, we do have a system and process set up where people can go into the hard files, paper copies, and find information. If we have difficulty finding the information, we also go back to the agency asking them to provide proof or documentation by sending it in to us through the mail, so we have an electronic and paper process together then in order to provide back a response, so further research can be done. In the end, if we are unable to locate an individual in the system, we request the agency to send that individual to a DHS, USCIS immigration office to insure that their records are up to date.

And then there are some technical things that we could cover. I have a colleague with me on standards of use that he can cover. Greg, would you like to talk to this?

Greg Powell – USCIS OIT – Contact Point

Yes. That's fine. I'm sorry. I want to make sure I've got the right slide here. I apologize these didn't get over there to you. In your e-mail that was sent over to us, you had some specific questions you wanted us to address dealing with standards. Your question is what standards are used in our verification interface, and it's SOAP over HTTPS and Web services security. Is there some other information you'd like for us to pass on?

Claudia Williams – ONC

No. That's great. I mean, one of the things we've been looking for—this is Claudia—is whether messaging standards, for instance, like HIPAA transaction type standard 272.71 have any use in some of these – not so much perhaps in what you're looking at, but looking at pinging eligibility systems. So we're looking for the use of open standards and the ones you've just sited are very good to know about, and we're also trying to figure out if there were any overarching, even the beginnings of overarching standards that were being used beyond just sort of setting up a tailored interface. So these ones are foundational. Those are great. And I think our general conclusion has been, there's not a lot of standardization in this domain for how these interfaces should work beyond sort of basic transport and security.

Greg Powell – USCIS OIT – Contact Point

Correct. I mean, we have a very robust enterprise service bus using Tipco, and that's where we're moving for all of our interfaces internally and hopefully externally. That way we can get to our legacy systems and get information out to whoever needs it.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Great. Thanks.

Greg Powell – USCIS OIT – Contact Point

All right. Thank you.

John Roessler – USCIS DHS – Chief SAFE Program

This is John. Thank you, Greg. I'd like to just wrap up briefly. There was a reference earlier. I might as well cover it now on the fee structure. The SAVE program does currently collect a fee on our queries from the agencies. That fee transaction is \$0.50 per query for the first two queries. It averages about a dollar a case, if you will. So there is a fee in place. Now that being said, while we do not know for sure, if you read the President's budget, they have set aside a request to provide appropriations to the program, so in the future, we are looking at an opportunity to move away from a fee based, but currently we are a fee program.

M

Is that true for e-Verify as well?

John Roessler – USCIS DHS – Chief SAFE Program

E-Verify is not a fee program.

M

Good. Thanks for the clarification.

John Roessler – USCIS DHS – Chief SAFE Program

You bet. And I believe, I kind of went through that. I don't want to take too much time just doing all the talking, so I do ... opportunity to share a little bit about the program and what we have to offer, and I'm more than happy to be here for questions.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Sure. This is Claudia. Thank you so much, both of you. Why don't we take just clarifying questions at this point since they will be able to stay on the line for the panel discussion? We're running a little behind schedule, which is not – it's been incredibly productive what we've covered so far. But why don't I ask Rose to walk through their presentation. Rose, you have a lot of great information here. Perhaps if there are certain slides that are more important than others, we can focus there, and then move from that into the discussion. But, folks, let's just pause for a minute and see if there are any clarifying questions for Greg and John.

David Molchany – Fairfax County, VA – Deputy County Executive

I just have one. This is Dave Molchany. Are your systems NIEM compliant?

Greg Powell – USCIS OIT – Contact Point

As far as the interfaces we provide, we do follow the NIEM interfaces for some of our more modern, some of our more recent interfaces, but SAVE, as an interface, has been out for some time. I would probably even call it a pre-NIEM interface, and so that one has not yet been upgraded to support NIEM.

David Molchany – Fairfax County, VA – Deputy County Executive

Are you moving towards NIEM though in anything new you do?

Greg Powell – USCIS OIT – Contact Point

Everything new we're doing is based on NIEM.

David Molchany – Fairfax County, VA – Deputy County Executive

Thank you.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Dave, this might be a good moment for a little sharing with other folks. Do you want to talk a little bit about what those NIEM requirements are?

David Molchany – Fairfax County, VA – Deputy County Executive

NIEM is the National Information Exchange Model, and it really defines how you identify data, basically the attributes of the data, who are the users of the data are, anything about the data that needs to be understood for sharing it, securing it, etc. And it basically is a federal standard, and we've used it in the national capital region for our CAD-to-CAD data sharing, which is computer aided dispatch data sharing between the different computer aided dispatch systems in the NCR. And it's just something that makes it easier to share data. I think it's a federal standard, so I assume that all the new systems we're talking about, as we hear about this today, are actually using that standard, so they basically would be a good platform for how we identify data, how we share data, how we secure data, etc.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Great. One idea I wanted to tee up, I know when we get into data elements in the next session, we had thought to perhaps have our standards and interoperability chief, Doug Fridsma, talk a little bit about the NIEM process and requirements, especially around data elements. But maybe we can ask him also to speak to the requirements from an interface standpoint.

Hector Alisayos – USCIS OIT

This is USCIS OIT again. One of the other advantages that via the use of our ASV is that we also perform protocol translation, and that's an example of being able to take existing interfaces such as SAVE and re-expose them with a NIEM based interface. We're currently doing that with AAMVA, and so that basically we can bring in HL-7. We can bring in HIPAA transaction or NIEM based transactions and then convert them to SAVE based transactions, so that's another thing that could be on the table for consideration.

Claudia Williams – ONC

That's great. Whoever just spoke, could you just say your name?

Hector Alisayos – USCIS OIT

I'm sorry. My name is Hector Alisayos for USCIS OIT.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Wonderful. Thank you. Thank you so much. Are there any other clarifying questions before we move on to Rose? Hearing none, Rose, we'd love to hear from you about EVVES.

Rose Trasatti – NAPHSIS – Project Manager

Thank you very much to the working group for inviting NAPHSIS to speak to you today about the EVVES system. Next slide, please. NAPHSIS, briefly, we're a nonprofit association for public health statistics and information systems. We were formed in 1933, and we represent the state health statistics and vital record agencies across the country in 57 jurisdictions: that's the 50 states, the 5 territories, the District of Columbia, and New York City is considered a separate vital records registration area.

Next slide, what is EVVES? It is the electronic verification of vital events. It's a remote, message based, query system that you could query both birth and death records, and authorized users. You have a single interface to generate a query to any participating vital records jurisdiction throughout the country, meaning that you don't need a separate system to verify or certify our record in South Dakota versus North Dakota versus Minnesota. It's a single interface. We support two different query types, the verifications and certifications, verifications being where an applicant has their certified birth or death record, or for application purposes. A certification is where the applicant does not have their certified birth record, for example, in front of them, so you're electronically certifying information the applicant has provided you. For purposes of this discussion and this working group, I'm going to focus on certification for this presentation. But the concept, the technology behind them is very similar.

Next slide, the EVVES system, basically NAPHSIS, we act as a national clearinghouse. There is an EVVES hub. We interface with agencies and with the vital record offices using a standard Internet based XML vital event transaction, which is NIEM compliant, as we were just talking earlier. We have a knowledge database for jurisdiction rules and data availability and mapping, so we know what each jurisdiction has available in terms of birth data to do electronic certification. How far back does their data go? We keep a log of all of the different requests and responses that go from the EVVES user agency to the vital records office. We have management reports, billing reports, and audit reports built into the system to keep audit trails, for example, of the different users that attempts to do queries, attempts to log into the system, etc.

Next slide, please. Basically a little bit of a history on EVVES, how we got here, and where we're going. We originally developed a pilot in cooperation with the Social Security Administration back in 2002. That pilot has been operational since August of 2002 and continues to run as of today. We have multiple EVVES user agencies on the system and 19 vital record offices that we've installed EVVES and are online and participating. We are in the process of putting in some system enhancements to take the system nationwide to meet real ID requirements. We are going to be completing those enhancements this summer, and we plan to transition out of our pilot mode into our nationwide system mode this summer, in addition to transitioning the current EVVES users onto our enhanced system. We will also be transitioning our current vital record offices onto the new system. And we're going to continue to roll out EVVES to the remaining vital record jurisdictions by mid 2011.

Next slide, please. There are a number of benefits to EVVES. It helps protect against potential fraudulent activities. It improves customer service because it facilitates quick access to accurate and verifiable vital records data. These queries are done in real time. Within seconds, you can get an indication of whether the information provided is on file at the vital records office. We firmly believe that it supports the future of business between our vital record offices and the EVVES users. And for birth certificate information, it can be used for proof of citizenship, and one of the benefits of EVVES is not all enrollees – you have a copy of their birth certificate, so this information can be electronically checked, and an enrollee may be applying for benefits in a jurisdiction where they weren't born.

Next slide, please. EVVES does safeguard the confidentiality of data. It doesn't allow users or people doing queries to browse data. It allows a secure mechanism for communication between the users and the vital records offices using SSL with authentication or VPN connections. It can integrate easily with current legacy systems that an agency may have. It supports Web services, so you can modify your legacy systems to integrate with the EVVES hub and be able to send that ... XML message back and forth to send queries and receive responses. In addition to being able to connect systems directly to the EVVES hub, we also offer a user friendly Internet based interface that's available if an agency chooses not to want to do any development work on their end. Later in the presentation, I'm going to show you

some screens of that interface. We do provide for individual queries in real time, and we also support a batch mode of operations.

Next slide, so benefits of working with NAPHSIS, we have established relationships with all of the vital records jurisdictions across the country. We can act as a single point of contact. You don't have to go to each of the vital record offices to obtain information. You can work through NAPHSIS directly. We have standard setting mechanisms in place, so we can provide commonality across the jurisdictions because jurisdictions all, while they have a lot of similarities, do have some unique characteristics among themselves. And we have a good recognition of the various jurisdiction laws that govern vital records access and the use of those records and that data.

Next slide, please. I just wanted to go through this diagram of how the EVVES birth certification process would work if you have enrollment applicants. They don't have a birth certificate. They want to apply for benefits. In step two, a clerk can either process the application in the current legacy system or use the EVVES user interface system I briefly described, or they can send these queries within the application or through a standalone mechanism. The query is sent to the EVVES hub, and the EVVES hub was then going to direct it to the appropriate state where the person indicates they were born.

That query will go to that vital records office, which then will be checked against their database of birth records. The results will be sent back to the hub and then back to the originating requestor. We also log all of the queries at the vital records level for audit trails. So basically we have that national hub, as you can see in the top right corner, and then there's a piece of EVVES that gets installed in every jurisdiction to communicate with the hub and to communicate with their birth database and/or death database.

Next slide, please. The different fields that are used for a query, the first and last name of the person, as it is recorded on the birth certificate, their date of birth, their place of birth their gender, and their mother's maiden surname. Those fields are required. Optionally the father's surname and the middle name of the applicant can be provided.

Next slide, the way the query logic works is we look for an exact match. We don't want to return any false positives, so we look for an exact match. If we can't find an exact match, then we're going to try some alternate queries to see if we can identify the field that may not have been keyed in properly or provided properly to provide the user with some helpful information. Either they can look at what they typed in to see if they typed it properly or ask the applicant, are you sure this is your first name? A lot of times a person may go by their middle name their whole life that's on their birth certificate, but that's how they're called day by day, and they don't understand that maybe even though you call me John, that's the middle name on my birth certificate, not Adam.

Next slide, so we do these queries, and then we're going to provide a response. One of the responses is a match. We found an exact match on the data you provided. We will also provide an indication if that birth record has been marked deceased. If we don't get an exact match, and we can find what may be a potential match with one of the required fields being in error, we will provide that helpful information back to the requestor. We will also return a no match if we just can't even find a potential match. If we find multiple records that match that same information entered, we'll provide that information back, and there's other return codes if it's a time out, if there's no data available for that year. For example, if you query a South Dakota birth record from 1925, and South Dakota doesn't have electronic birth records available for that year, we would let the requestor know that as well.

Next slide, so I'm going to step through quickly the screens that we have for our EVVES user interface. Once again, this is if somebody wants to use the system, does not want to embed the queries into their

current application. They could use this login screen. They receive a user ID and a password. They sign a user agreement form. They would log into the system—next slide—they're presented with a welcome screen, which would indicate what jurisdictions are currently online with the EVVES system that they can query, and also what functionality and privileges they have within their user ID to do queries.

Next screen, so if they're doing a certification query, they're providing information to the EVVES system on the applicant. They're going to indicate which jurisdiction the person was born in and the year of birth. We have a state XX, which we call our test data or our dummy state that we use, and that's basically what's showing here. And they would continue with the query. If for some reason data didn't exist for that year for that state, we would provide a message indicating so.

Next slide—

W

Hello.

Rose Trasatti – NAPHSIS – Project Manager

Yes?

W

I wonder. Maybe you could wrap up in a minute, and folks can look through the slides on their own and ask you questions.

Rose Trasatti – NAPHSIS – Project Manager

Sure. If you got a match, we would indicate an exact match was found. Next slide, and then there's some information that can be printed out or kept electronically with the applicant's file. Next slide, if we don't find a match, we're going to indicate under a query results the problem with date of birth in this case, and the user can then check the information they entered.

Next, we also provide to the agencies a desk guide, which basically talks about each of the jurisdictions, what data is available, if there's any anomalies in the data that you need to be aware of, how to find information on the certificate if they're doing a verification. That's just a quick snippet of our desk guide, just to show that we do work with the agencies and the vital record offices so that all understand the data that's being queried.

Next, here are the different agencies that are using EVVES. We have three DMV offices that using EVVES now. We expect that to expand with the Real ID Act. Social Security, Department of State Passport uses our system, the Office of Personnel Management. We have a handful of Medicaid offices on the system, as well as Army National Guard.

Next, I'll just go briefly through this. NAPHSIS, we work with the agencies, and we work with the vital record offices to support no matches when no matches occur. Moving quickly, next slide, this is a map showing the current states that are online with EVVES to date, the ones that are ready to go live when we move to our new system, and like I indicated, we are working with all the other states positioning them for the installation of EVVES.

Next, from a NAPHSIS perspective, we have a rollout plan. We've procured a data analysis tool to help the jurisdictions understand the quality and accuracy of their birth data. We've been independently going through a certification and accreditation process with an independent vendor to meet the NIST 800-53 moderate level security requirements, and we do enter into memorandums of agreement with each vital

record office and with each user agency. At the vital record offices, they're required to establish an EVVES database, have a part of EVVES installed in their infrastructure, and then work with us and with agencies on no matches and data quality evaluation. User agencies that want to use the EVVES system will need to incorporate EVVES into their business process and either develop their own interface into our system or use the screen, which I just showed you on the previous slides to query data and get responses.

Next, so the vital record offices are basically automating their records back for data queries, putting it into a central database within each jurisdiction, looking to do some type of data clean up and quality improvements, and also to mark birth records deceased if they have a death record on file or have received a death record from an outside jurisdiction indicating that person is deceased.

Next, in conclusion, we believe that legislation promotes the use of EVVES, the Real ID Act in particular I mentioned. We are in the process of making EVVES a nationwide system to have access via federal agencies to the system, as well as jurisdiction sister agencies to the system, and we truly believe that making EVVES a success requires the cooperation and the partnership building efforts in relationship between NAPHSIS, between our organization and EVVES user agencies, as well as at the jurisdiction level between the vital record offices and their sister agencies, their sister Medicaid offices, DMV offices, etc. Hopefully you got all that. I talked quickly to try and cover as much as I could, so we have some time to answer questions.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Rose, I think, since we have a panel discussion coming up, why don't we maybe, unless there are burning clarification questions, any burning questions from the group, so we'll have a chance to come back with some thoughtful questions during the discussion. So we'll hand it over to Aneesh now for a panel discussion across the verification interfaces with questions from the group.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

All right. Listen. This is, wow, lots of material today, so what I'd love to do at this point is if you could all flip to the slide 25, frame the conversations that we wanted to have as a group, and the first one of those was to figure out where we believe the standardization process could help make a difference on the ease of use and the timeliness and the efficiency of all the issues that we're describing.

We wanted to have a conversation about those candidate standards based on what we've already heard and ideas that you all have had coming into this session. There are obviously other aspects of what we want to cover in what is an abbreviated timeframe, and so you can see the full portfolio of topics that we can cover. Obviously Dave and others were highlighting some of the security issues that we heard from the earlier testimony, so how might we think about the foundation, if you will, for what those security protocols might be, provisions around reuse, and so forth.

Given the time constraints, Claudia, I'm thinking if we first open up for feedback amongst the group about where they want to dive in first so that we could have this conversation in the time we have.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Sounds great.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Why don't we start with the topic of standards, the first bullet that we identified about potential candidate standards, given all that we've been doing thus far? Anyone wish to begin that conversation with what their thoughts might be on where we move?

M

(Inaudible.)

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

I know there was a lot that we were engaged on, so we're going to keep that line of conversation flowing, but let's....

Anne Castro – BlueCross BlueShield South Carolina – Chief Design Architect

Aneesh, this is Anne. Because it was so quiet, I felt the need to fill the void.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Please.

Anne Castro – BlueCross BlueShield South Carolina – Chief Design Architect

On the standard, since we know what ACA requires in terms of those top three, can we concentrate on just them and assume we're going to leverage them? I don't see how there would be much of another option available. What are your thoughts on that?

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

No, I hope we conveyed that most certainly at the front end of this. Yes, I think, if you recall, the punch line from Sam's summary slide that the current state may not be in the ideal place.

Anne Castro – BlueCross BlueShield South Carolina – Chief Design Architect

We could work on what minimally needs to be done to put it in that place.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Absolutely.

Anne Castro – BlueCross BlueShield South Carolina – Chief Design Architect

And have that be our focus and quickly move on that.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

That I hope would be our hypothesis. Is anyone feeling differently about that initial conversation, constraining us to those specific areas?

Garland Land – NAPHSIS – Executive Director

This is Garland Land with NAPHSIS. I'd like to clarify one thing in terms of.... I think, if I understand, part of what you're trying to do is verify citizenship, and that requires looking at people who have immigrated into the United States, as well as those who were born in the United States. The SSA system is used now for citizenship verification for the SCHIP program because that verification database does exist, citizenship verification exists in the database for individuals born from 1991 to the present.

As I understand it, they don't have a citizenship market in their records before 1991. They accepted birth certificates and other identification documents, but they were not verified at that time. That's why SSA is using the EVVES system for citizenship verification. So I think, even though the SSA system is in the law, and it's very useful for current individuals, essentially people under 20 years of age, it is lacking for persons who are older than that, and I guess that's one of the advantages of the EVVES system is that it does extend back to older individuals for citizenship verification for people who are born in the United States.

Paul Swanenburg – SSA – Senior IT Specialist & Program Manager

Hello. This is Paul Swanenburg with SSA. That is basically accurate, but I thought there was a little clarifying point we would make. While we only handle the proof from the point forward, going back in our history records, we have indicators in our files, which we use for determining a citizenship response so that we do cover all cases, even going back ... basis, but again, the older records are not quite as accurate as the newer records would be.

Claudia Williams – ONC

This is Claudia. Just going ... very good question, I think, as the conversations are proceeding in HHS on the gory details of exactly what's going to happen with these interfaces, they've teed up some questions that they particularly want our input on, and they're reflected on this slide, but I'll just point to two. One is security and authentication. What would a secure interface look like, and can we make some sort of principle recommendations in that area?

The second is, I think, a real interest through the modernization effort to consider the consumer mediated model, as compared to B2B, and layout our best thinking about what would need to be addressed and what might be some next steps to move in that direction, so I think, globally, obviously there are groups and we're a part of those that are grappling with the very detailed specification granularity of exactly what each one looks like, but they've teed up some questions for us that I think speak to, as we move in this direction, what would a modernized system look like and what can we say that would be helpful, practical, and move us better in that direction.

David Molchany – Fairfax County, VA – Deputy County Executive

Aneesh, this is Dave Molchany. I'm sorry I didn't answer the first part of the question, but obviously from our questions this morning, we were interested in basically how data is protected, and then the other side was whether NIEM was going to be the standard underlying all this, or whether there was some other thinking on that. Those are really our issues.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

I think that's where we want to have a conversation. Now for those of you on the call that are not familiar, the ONC has established NIEM as the framework for interoperability specifications, but would certainly welcome this group's conversation about it. I don't recall if we actually briefed this group on the NIEM process. Claudia will correct me if I have or if my memory is off or not. But that would be a good conversation to have in terms of what are the constraining components of this so that we're all working off the same sheet of music. Dave, did you have a suggestion on the secure, the level of security sufficient for you to feel comfortable with these exchanges or these transmission points?

David Molchany – Fairfax County, VA – Deputy County Executive

No. I think ... topics to go into in more detail. I think the question we had asked earlier, you know, what happens. How do you get the data securely across the network to the customer? We know that once a customer has it, we're going to have to give them basic instructions and the fact they have to secure it, but beyond that, I don't think you could do anything more. I don't think there's any big point there or anything that we have in mind. It's just something we need to look at, I think, as a group.

For NIEM, we've used it, and we've used it effectively. We know it's a federal standard, and I think that basically gong in a little bit more detail on it so people know what it is. And I think I heard we're going to do that. I think that would be great, and we've used it effectively.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Aneesh, this is Henry.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Go for it, my man.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Yes. I think we may have to touch on what are some of the established, you know, kind of policy and security frameworks for – I think it's not a technical challenge to connect via a set of services to move some data around, but it'd be good to visit some of the discussions around the governance that needed to abide by a common set of policies because every organization up to it border has a different framework that it uses between Fed, states, and anything that's non-federal or state.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Great topic. Anyone else want to react to the conversation about how one sets up a process to navigate the various policy frameworks on security as this evolves?

M

That's a popular topic.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

It's important. Obviously it's not an easy one.

Oren Michels – Mashery – CEO

This is Oren Michels. Is the navigating of security framework going to be something where we're likely to have the ability to set a standard for that and to, in some sense, dictate what security standards would be, or is it going to be yet another case of there will be bunches of them out there, and anybody ... against it is going to have to figure them out, and maybe we should make sure we have the standard for documenting them.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

You know, Oren, you are touching on a very important conversation and maybe a hybrid of the two. What you heard Claudia mention is that the policy team that's responsible for making those judgments has specifically called on our feedback to some of those issues, but this committee itself will not set those standards from a policy standpoint, but we're asked to provide that input. I want to be careful if I say that correctly, Claudia. You might repeat what I've just said. But in a nutshell, there's this request for our feedback on those issues and to think about how would one govern in a world of, frankly, policy complexity.

Oren Michels – Mashery – CEO

I'm sorry. Go ahead.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

No, and then separate from that, the question is, are there some basic floors that we believe, from a technological standpoint, would ... some principles for how data would flow so that we have some comfort. I mean, in the standards committee more generally, for example, the role of TLS for basic transmission. We have some basic things that we can engage. Claudia, do you want to repeat how I framed that?

Claudia Williams – ONC

I think we're going to need to have a little more conversation, Oren, about that, but I would say that thinking about it in a sort of NHIN Direct modality that, in particular, for the verification interface, the authentication and secure transport would be two that we should definitely put forward our recommendations on, and I think ID resolution for consumers, if we want to do a consumer mediated model. I don't know that we need to speak more broad. Well, it's a question for the group whether we should think a bit more broadly about security practices in general. I would initially say no. Does that help?

Oren Michels – Mashery – CEO

Yes. I think that what I'm hearing, which makes a lot of sense, is that not only are we not mandated to dictate security standards, but we wouldn't really have much luck doing it anyway. We could talk about them, but the world isn't going to run around changing their standards in any time horizon we care about, so I think the very best thing we can do as part of this is to try to come up with a framework that, as we document the various interfaces that we're dealing with from the various suppliers, we're going to be dealing with in terms of data suppliers, that documenting security in a way that developers will be able to code against it is going to be yet another thing we're going to have to document, along with the data standards themselves and the rules.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Yes. This is Henry again. I think it'll take years to try to tackle what is the big set of standards that are needed.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Decades.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Decades.

Oren Michels – Mashery – CEO

...optimistic.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Yes, I'm more optimistic than you are. The thing is that, but it does help inform some – I don't often use the world lightweight, but it is a lighter weight set of common, pragmatic, you know, kind of security approaches that, as coders and developers, you can create kind of that service that moves porously through multiple interfaces for whatever endpoint has to consume that information, and then that same framework also plugs into, well, how do you do, in certain cases, in person proofing or is there an authentication mechanism that includes a workflow that creates gatekeepers on the first time someone needs to be vetted in order to trust that authentication mechanism.

Gina Garza – IRS – Associate CIO, Applications Development

This is Gina Garza, and I thought, at this stage, it might be helpful to kind of articulate what was the method that we used in the FASA model. There were two things that we had to authenticate and provide security protocols for. One is that the interaction with the Department of Ed, that it was in fact an interaction with them, so first that the request was originating with the Department of Education, and for that what we used was the hash key message authentication code and a correlation ID. Once we verified that, yes, it was in fact the Department of Ed that was asking for the data, we then used a shared secrets approach from the taxpayer that had provided the information, and it matched up against our databases, and that kind of allowed us then to be assured that it was the person who was supposed to see the data

and, as I said, we had already authenticated that the request was coming from the Department of Ed. Those were the two approaches that we used for each transaction.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Have you had any conversations about what this might look like moving forward, broadly, across interfaces you might develop? Have you started...? I know I've heard Jonathan speak about desiring to move in this consumer access model. Do you have some starting places or principles for how you might apply that IRS FASA model more broadly to ... access to tax data?

Gina Garza – IRS – Associate CIO, Applications Development

We've been talking about it, but we really haven't sat down. We expect that this model is something that could help us provide additional access to taxpayers around their data, but we haven't. We're going through right now developing an e-authentication strategy and solution so that we can go in that direction, but I don't have those details with me.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

We have a number of folks who are with us as well on this call, Paul from the SSA in particular. Did you want to similarly add some detail around these questions, as it relates to the standards that you had testified to the other day in reaction to this? I know what you're hearing from the IRS is a mixture of what they used to do, what they may be doing in the past?

Paul Swanenburg – SSA – Senior IT Specialist & Program Manager

From the SSA's viewpoint, what we've done is we've set up a network where we deal with basically state and federal agencies. And so in that context, we haven't built it out to deal with like the individuals coming in. The standards we follow are the typical federal standards, secure network, that type of thing. I'm not sure if I'm answering your question.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

No. The nature of the question is for those of you who have heard the testimony that Paul gave originally, and you've now heard Gina's comments, and we've had just the HHS and the EVVES piece. Given what you've heard, are there areas where, on the call, people believe some additional standardization or focus might actually improve upon the interfaces these folks have already got in place at varying levels of models and complexity of how to get there. In other words, where might there be a marginal opportunity to strengthen or improve upon any of the interfaces you all have already done that could be then used in this manner if there was a little bit more attention paid to them, if you will, more focus on how they can be improved, if you will?

Paul Swanenburg – SSA – Senior IT Specialist & Program Manager

I think the front part of the exchange that we've set up with most of the agencies provides a basic identity match right up front, and I think that's relatively simple type of matching. We currently are doing that. We're on target to do roughly 660 million of these transactions for state and federal agencies. I think that the accuracy that comes out of that is pretty good. I think, if we put that as sort of a front end or make it available to these matches, that helps you move forward to the other data that you need.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Anyone on the call comment on how that front end piece is, from what you've heard thus far about how the ease of its use and how others could connect to it, any reaction to that comment? Oren, in particular, I was curious if you had any thoughts about how you might put questions you might pose to Paul and his team about how that's been done if there is a model for increased simplicity and how that's executed, if at all need.

Oren Michels – Mashery – CEO

The reason I didn't have a direct question on it is that it's sort of the art of the possible. I don't know. I think that part of what we're going to do is to recommend simplified methods that entities and exchanges that want to be able to play might consider implementing because the easier you make it to build, the more people are going to be able to build systems against your service. And that might be a catalyst for a general move toward a more standardized security method, but I think that the shorter term need is really to make sure that we have a framework in which whatever the security method that's currently available is documented so that developers can look at it and say, okay, I am capable of coding against this or I'm not, and they could make a rational set of comments around if the security needs to be altered before anybody is going to be able to really build against it. The point is to give as much information as possible and then, at that point, determine if it's security or data or something else that might be keeping developers from building against it.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Others on the call, Reed, Anne, any reaction to this notion that, at a minimum, we should document what you're doing on these things so they can be used by developers? I don't know if we've even talked about how we do that today. Gina, Paul, John, anyone, when someone wants to write an application that communicates with what you've just outlined, how easy is it for a developer to understand what it would take for them to connect?

Reed Tuckson – UnitedHealth Group – EVP & Chief of Medical Affairs

This is Reed. It certainly does beg the notion of trying to get the developers to talk with us and say how willing are you to connect into this. And I don't know whether – do we have plans explicitly to bring that voice to the table quickly?

Anne Castro – BlueCross BlueShield South Carolina – Chief Design Architect

This is Anne. By this, we mean many "this's", right?

M

That's the point. There are so many of them that you need to be providing as much information as possible. I think that having a repository and a framework for it is for the information, let alone for the data itself is super important.

Reed Tuckson – UnitedHealth Group – EVP & Chief of Medical Affairs

Let me, before I get in trouble with Aneesh, let me say that, I mean, perhaps we need to start to think about, and again, I'm looking for you all to yell at me. But how do we start prioritizing some of this, the key fields that we do need to move, you know, to get a start, to get a foothold here, and then sort of ask them what's it going to take for you guys to get excited about this.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Yes. Reed, you're absolutely spot on the money. I think Dan said it best. We've got a set of basic information that are necessary for us to verify pieces of information. We have a number of agencies who have testified that today they have some method—good, bad, indifferent, current, modern, etc.—to electronically connect to that information. And I think it is very natural to ask the question, how might we then look under the hood to see how easy it is today for folks to develop towards those interfaces, and if there's sort of an overarching framework and then perhaps even some additional suggestions specific to these federal sources for verification as an example that could be commented on by the group. We'll talk about next steps at the end of this, obviously, but I think that's precisely the right conversation, Reed. I think that's spot on the money.

W

Shouldn't we be looking at what e-Find and Spider do, which are real time state tools that verify these databases plus several others? While ACCA may only have these particular demands, we still don't know what Medicaid policy will be in the 2014 environment, so there's likely....

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Tell us about those that you were describing.

W

Spider and e-Find are state developed tools. E-Find is Utah, which is shareware, and Spider is one that Washington uses that puts real time verification in caseworkers' hands as they're talking to clients on the phone or dealing with a Web app. Now what they're matching may be little dated, but the information pops up within seconds of them doing queries. I actually, after our last meeting, e-mailed those states and asked for screen shots of what caseworkers see, and it was very impressive. I'm happy to send it to you all, but it seems to me that some states have taken that action ahead or have built this tool for caseworkers, so that's one thing I think we should look at.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

If I may, first of all, is Fletcher on the line?

Steve Fletcher – State of Utah – Chief Information Officer

I'm here.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

I don't imagine you would know at this level of detail within social services, but is there a way for you to figure out what that is pulling from. Is that connecting to these federal agency sites? And have they already established a direct linkage? Any way you could help us just get a little bit more meat on the bone on how that's done? Again, I don't think you have it on your fingertips, but do you know much about that, how we could get there?

Steve Fletcher – State of Utah – Chief Information Officer

Yes. That's actually where I was going to go with this whole concept because while the presentation has been talking about data, and some of it has been the user interface, obviously states don't care about that. They want to get the information, and they want to be able to query those sites so that they can get that information real time because that's where the determination is going to be made. And so, yes, the tool that we have does just that. It goes out, and it interfaces with the systems that we can. Sometimes that information is not provided in any other form other than batch.

Nevertheless, where we can, we try to – we've done it in a number of different ways. You've done screen scraping. We've done pseudo queries. We've done batch transfers in order to be able to provide that kind of interface to the particular systems that are going to provide it. So it's a system that's been developed according to what current interfaces are available. But I think that every state is going to have to do that.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Was it ... your team to build the connection points to the federal sources to do that? I guess....

Steve Fletcher – State of Utah – Chief Information Officer

Yes. So the idea there is to, all right, we can identify that, and can we make that available? Absolutely we can make it available for anybody else to use. But we've sort of done just as you've described, taken what we have and what's available and tried to make it a part of a single system.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

That is the question. Right, Reed? Was that your question originally, Reed, to what extent might we get how easy it is to replicate what Utah, and I don't know who did Spider again, but to be able to enable, as the states make their judgment for what they do, this is a base set of capabilities from which they could more easily and efficiently collect that information, as Steve so eloquently said.

Reed Tuckson – UnitedHealth Group – EVP & Chief of Medical Affairs

Well said. Yes, that's my question.

Steve Fletcher – State of Utah – Chief Information Officer

Yes. And so, probably the next step then is for us and anybody else who have tried to address this to say, all right, this is how we went about it, and this is what we produced, and we'd be happy to do that.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

And while you do that, my federal friends who are on the phone, do you guys have your own kind of bilateral negotiations with some of these states where you've actually put some development time to make it easier for them to connect? And if so, have we captured that learning in this environmental scan?

Paul Swanenburg – SSA – Senior IT Specialist & Program Manager

This is Paul at SSA. We've tracked the online applications that the states have developed to come in and access our data, the verification part upfront. We have 27 states, I believe, right now that actually have set that up, so I think the points that have been made all along here are good ones, and that is that we are happy to work with the states as they have resources made available to them and are willing. We'll work with you to give you that online application. We realize how valuable that is. And I think we have a second....

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Paul, can I just slightly revise my request? Do you know to what extent the feedback from those who use that platform have found that to be easy to write to? What I'm trying to get my arms around is there's probably some variability in how these folks individually interface with you, and some might have it simple, and some might have it more difficult, and all of them might have a collective request of you that, oh gosh, if only you did X, as Oren keeps describing, documenting X and how we communicate with you, we as a group could really make it easier to work together without the current model.

I don't know if we've heard that in testimony thus far, and forgive me if we have, and I'd forgotten. But that would be the narrower question, Paul, which is to say how – do you know how easy or hard it was for your partners to tie into you? And were there strategies and ideas in how they did it that would be useful for this group? And have they been asking you for modernizing approaches to make it even easier for the 28th and 29th state? I guess I'm not putting you on the spot. I'm just curious if you have a sense for that.

Paul Swanenburg – SSA – Senior IT Specialist & Program Manager

At a higher level, we know that it varies from state-to-state. In some cases, we've started in, and the state has backed out. They felt that for whatever purpose, it was too difficult. Other states move very quickly into it. We have a department that actually works with that, and I think I'd probably be helpful if we pulled the information from them and got their experiences and what they thought might be the best way to go.

M

Aneesh, I think that's going to be one of your challenges, obviously.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Our challenges.

M

Yes, our challenges, my apologies, our challenges in the fact that it would be best if the federal programs that have to be interfaced to, you could make it a Web service, and make it available, and so people could tie into it easily. But on the other hand, the states, many of them are not able to take advantage of that. So you have both sides of this interface that are not necessarily where you would like them to be as far as current technology.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

This is Henry again. CMS operates one of the largest private networks in healthcare, if not in all sectors. The reason why we do that is because that private network has the onboarding and governance process to control who can consume a Web service at the system-to-system interface level as opposed to if we put up an Internet facing application that we have a vetting and authentication mechanism for users. And I think the reason why I mentioned that earlier is because, without that, then sure. We can publish Web services to be consumed, but when it's personally identifiable information, we have to know something about the consumption end of what that entity is doing with the data or it's an individual, right? If we don't answer that question—

W

Well, you have to authenticate the individual.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Right.

M

You do, but I think that the states are going to provide that authentication. That's what they do. They do that all the time. And now it's just a matter of how you transfer that data back and forth from the sources, and you can have a different philosophy in terms of what kind of information customers are going to control.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Yes. But again, the difficult part is what do you use to govern that flow? What controls or allows that flow

M

If you do it from the state's perspective, they provide that governance, and so now it's just a matter of the exchange between the federal information and the states requesting of that.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Right, and the states communicate with CMS because they are on our private network.

M

And they do that all the time.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Right.

Claudia Williams – ONC

This is Claudia....

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

...base use case involves basically the consumer engagement aspect of this as well. Henry, we are going to have to tackle both sides. Is that Claudia?

Claudia Williams – ONC

Yes. I was just going to make the same reflection that this conversation is very interesting because it raises – this line of thinking is fabulous and supported by the B2B model, but we probably need to parallel that with saying if we're in the consumer mediated space, what would this look like differently. Also, wanted to – both EVVES and DHS, and I believe the IRS, I don't know, mentioned that they were using Web services, but that often maybe states weren't taking advantage of that, so it might be interesting to hear from them about some of the same questions about how hard is it to program? What are the limits at the state level? And what's been the take up of that so far?

W

But just a quick question on the consumer mediated process though. Can you all, aside from giving permission to check tax records, which is a huge issue, explain how you would view why a consumer mediated process would come to play into what we're looking at because I'm not seeing that?

Gina Garza – IRS – Associate CIO, Applications Development

The issue is that, at least from the IRS perspective, the issue is that we're not allowed to provide.

W

That part I understand. Beyond the authorization to check tax records, is there a consumer mediated issue here?

Gina Garza – IRS – Associate CIO, Applications Development

The taxpayer has to be the one who controls the data and gives it to another agency. So we cannot provide another agency that information.

W

But beyond that, is there any other issue?

Gina Garza – IRS – Associate CIO, Applications Development

No.

W

Okay.

Gina Garza – IRS – Associate CIO, Applications Development

That I'm aware of.

Claudia Williams – ONC

I guess—this is Claudia—as a starting model, if we look out to the world we're trying to create, a question is do we think the B2B model is fully extensible to a simplified enrollment and eligibility system, including potentially the tech innovation that we want to create? And is there value in putting the consumer more – having it be more transparent and more in their control, as we think about use cases? You know, we may

not imagine the ways in which they may want to use that information and deploy it, and it allows them in some sense to make the margin decision about where they want to move next with their data.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Claudia, this is Aneesh. I think my comment here was that because we are not setting policy, it's not for this body to say whether a B2B model or a consumer model is better or worse. It's meant to say how might we get the data elements and the transition standards and the pieces that we're talking about in support of either of these policy objectives, and that was, I think, the question. Did I say that wrong, Claudia?

Claudia Williams – ONC

No. That's great. Right. Absolutely. I guess the question I heard is just even, and I didn't answer it very well, is what's the scenario under which that might exist. Is that what you're asking?

W

That's right. I can think of some, but I think we have a very limited timeframe to do a lot of work, and I just wanted to lay out there, aside from a – I just think it's worth exploring, is this really going to yield fruit in the short term? Is this something we need to – I mean, I'm open to it. I just, I think it's a question worth asking when we know B2B is necessary.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

This is Sam. There's another component of this same issue, which is, let's assume for a moment that B2B is the most efficient way to do it. There's another opportunity for consumer mediation, and that is in terms of the reuse of this information. ACA requires the consumer to be able to provide changes in circumstance or to potentially reuse this information for application to other programs. So it could be through the exchanges or some other mechanism that consumers will have the ability to use the information that is gathered, again assuming it's a B2B model that is the most efficient to get it there.

Gina Garza – IRS – Associate CIO, Applications Development

Yes. This is Gina. Just to add on that, I think one of the other challenges that we will have is the currency of the data. They're going to need more current information than we may have available, and so, in some cases, I believe that's going to be the bigger challenge for us than getting the data to the consumer.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

I think my sense of this is, Sam, we should probably flip to the next slide since we're getting into the conversations about next steps, and we're kind of moving on the agenda. I think that may be a productive way to frame and have a debate because I think some of the comments that are on the slide on 26 might actually be the basis for this conversation, as we get into this final time on the agenda. Would you be okay to kind of outline page 26 so that we can basically target the conversation now around some of these initial thoughts, given exactly some of the varying opinions we have on the call?

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Yes, I think we ought to do that and use that time to try to see if we can come to some at least general framework agreements. People turning to slide 26, I think what our assumption going in is that a lot of the existing verification interfaces don't need to be ripped and replaced, but there's an opportunity to try to modernize them. We want to try to focus the recommendations that we have on what are the principles that would allow us to modernize these interfaces, especially as we think about 2014.

Some of the conversation we've had now and the question keeps being raised, and I know it was raised, Paul, when you testified originally, is what does it take to take the batch process that you have now and others to drive it to more real time, Web services model. How do we enable the storage and the reuse of this information so that consumers can have some control over it? And what are the security and privacy requirements, both for the threshold and the match? We've heard that we're unable to gather exact information about just what is the methodology behind the way the match is done now, the way authentication is done. We've heard different senses about what the transport mechanisms are.

And back to this question of, is consumer mediated approach, is it practical? How possible is it? And at what stage might even it be most valuable to the consumer? And then as we go through this process, what are the additional standardizations that would enable us to make this process much simpler, not only the for the consumers, but for the people who are going to be administering these programs?

Let me just pause. Somebody had raised this earlier, and it seems to me to be in some ways a fundamental question. I got a little freaked out when I heard the conversation was going to take years or decades. But if we are talking about three principal sources of information in terms of verification, is it possible to even consider real time Web service interfaces to those three different sources of information?

When we heard about matching data elements, there were really just three or four data elements that people seemed to be using for matching. I know this isn't a conversation to talk about core data elements or field lengths, etc. But that should be a part of our discussion at some point about insuring that there is a data model that is used for those core data elements.

Paul, maybe we can ask you to start off. I think it was me or somebody else who asked the question when you testified about the likelihood of moving to real time SSA interface.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Yes. That wouldn't take years, I would imagine, right, Paul?

Paul Swanenburg – SSA – Senior IT Specialist & Program Manager

That's correct. Actually, I think that's probably one of the most important things we could take out of this, and that is, we are currently looking at bringing up that in real time. There's a proposal at the agency right now. We haven't defined the timeframe for that, but I think information coming back from this group might add some sensitivity to that discussion at the agency. So what we're looking for at the outside is to have that done by the end of fiscal year 2011. Whether that can be accelerated or not is something I'm sure that you may want to weigh in on. That's, I think, the first thing is having our agency bring that up in a real time environment, and then obviously the point was made earlier is working with the states to find ways to help them, the states that are not currently using a real time exchange with us, to enable them to also come in on that access.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Just to highlight the point, the distinction between taking forever to fix every legacy system and, instead, being able to connect to a fairly simple interface that you put out, that could be accomplished and, in your mind, adopted by the 20+ states relatively quickly, would it not? In other words, as a contrast to the need to replace every legacy system in the country with one that has all the agreed upon, simple, technical specs, you could envision. I don't know if you've got an estimate for how long it took the 27 states to sign up under the current batch model, and what you think it would mean if they were to move to the real time model, but I would imagine it could conceivably be relatively quickly.

Paul Swanenburg – SSA – Senior IT Specialist & Program Manager

That should be the case because essentially the real time model is based almost entirely upon the batch process in terms of data elements, the types of things that they would need to know, that they would need to capture and bring back to them. So that's, it follows so closely to it that they already have that body of knowledge.

Deborah Bachrach – Bachrach Health Strategies – President

This is Deborah Bachrach. I have a question. If SSA can move to real time exchange of data, I was interested in having thought about accessing quarterly earnings. Given the focus on current income, I'm wondering if that information is in fact probative. I know, Sam, it's not checked on your box on slide 21, but would that be probative information on income because the IRS data is also very old?

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Paul, is that on your list of things to be able to share?

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

This is Henry. That's a very specific question that is an example of how we're informed that certain batch processes wound up to be batched because it needed to kind of go through a cycle of change before that data can be shared and consumed by another system as opposed to, I think I'd be the first one to say that the drive from a consumer perspective is to always first opt for the real time model, but I think there are natural business cycles of processing, which informs us that it needs to be batch because it has to come to some quiescence state before it can actually go to a downstream system.

Paul Swanenburg – SSA – Senior IT Specialist & Program Manager

This is Paul. With respect to some of the information dealing with the weights data, just from a technical perspective, you may want to consider what sits out there in the national directory of new hires. And I know there are disclosed considerations about that. SSA has worked with the Office of Child Support to get online access to that data so that we get at the quarterly wage, the unemployment on a quarterly basis, and new hire types of data that's in those databases.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Anybody want to react to Henry's comments about the distinction between why and in certain circumstances it's more appropriate to start in one way or the other? I'm curious if anyone else on the call has a reaction to his comment there before we move on. Okay, then we'll move on to the next part.

At a minimum, we're obviously spending a lot of time on SSA, but there are a whole range of other interfaces that we identified over the course of our hearings. I'm assuming a similar conversation with each of them might yield a similar conversation about saying, well, in some cases, we're ready to move to the next level. In others, we haven't, but we could, depending on this committee's input. There's clearly to the bullet point of whether or not there's an opportunity to modernize. There's at least some degree of a potential for modernization within existing, tightly defined, federal sources for verification that we could conceivably have a group of folks look at to see what are the proposed candidate areas, and where and in what manner might we suggest an acceleration to that regard or even an introduction of one if one doesn't exist.

Reed Tuckson – UnitedHealth Group – EVP & Chief of Medical Affairs

Aneesh, can I just ask you one thing on this very point though that I just was a little bit, and I might be over-reading it. Recommendations on principles, the word —principles" makes me nervous versus the recommendations on how to get it done. Principle sounds long-term, non-engaged. Am I overly concerned about the word —principles"?

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

I'll let maybe Sam, and Claudia might want to chime in. We have some very specific areas where we can be engaged that I think Anne was the one at the very, very beginning said we know the three or four kind of verification sources. We've heard testimony on them. Commentary on specific things, I think, are very naturally a part of this discussion, but there may be broader principles as other data sources that haven't gotten the same attention might....

Reed Tuckson – UnitedHealth Group – EVP & Chief of Medical Affairs

In other words, and so I think you answered it, but let me just sort of, again, I want to make sure I'm tracking with you. I mean, at the end of the day, what we're trying to say is we have reviewed a variety of solutions to this problem, and we have satisfied ourselves that there are some low hanging fruit, which ought to be taken advantage of right now, and here are the ways in which those low hanging fruit should be taken advantage of. I mean, there are models of what works now.

There are things you can latch onto. And those things that can be latched onto can be also enhanced if you could just get the software people to decide, if you could get the states to decide to implement some of these things with legitimate partners. There are things you can do.

In addition to that, for the long-term, here are the principles that need to be described. But I just want to make sure that we put as much emphasis on this point on here's what's right here before us today, as opposed to worrying about principles. I just get nervous when that happens.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Yes. Anyone want to react to that statement? That is a good summary of what I said, but we have to hear this from others in the room. Are we all hearing the same thing?

David Molchany – Fairfax County, VA – Deputy County Executive

...I don't know if this is exactly what you're asking to hear, but this is Dave Mulchany. I think that from the people on our end that were listening, I think that if we move forward with standards that even over time make it more flexible in how we can access system information, the Feds can make it available to us, that would be very helpful. I think more online, real time availability would be great. I think that our standard needs to, if they can't be implemented immediately, at least allow for, over time, that flexibility to happen. I'm not too worried about the word "principles" if the word "principles" really means standards, and we do have set standards on how we share data from a business-to-business standpoint between states and local governments and the federal government, and we have standards on how we actually make data available to our customers in a secure way.

Reed Tuckson – UnitedHealth Group – EVP & Chief of Medical Affairs

That actually makes sense to me. Thank you very much. I think the word "principles" sort of has a restiveness to it, but standards has an actual real time, let's move it sort of connotation to it. So if that's what you're saying, then I feel comfortable. Thank you.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

And it may be a mixture of both, Reed, I think is what we're trying to say. Sam, Claudia, any reaction to that?

Claudia Williams – ONC

I really like the way Reed summarized where we want to go. The only note I would make is there are going to be people actually building – so I guess, just to clarify, we're going to go up to the edge of saying here's where we think you might want to move in these interfaces, but obviously we're not standing them

up. That would be one point. I guess the second would be, Steve, to push you a little bit on the comment you just made. When we looked at these interfaces, we didn't see a lot of evidence for standards, and maybe we were just looking at too granular a level. We've heard about NIEM today. We've heard about using TLS. We've definitely heard about some standards that are at a pretty foundational level, I would say, so if you want to just say a word or two about what you see to be the main standards in use that we might either say go forth, this is what we should use, or we need more specificity here. I think that could be really helpful, so if you could talk just a minute or two about that.

Steve Fletcher – State of Utah – Chief Information Officer

Well it's sort of as we were describing before. Every agency and every state has put up their services in some fashion. Much of it has not been coordinated with anybody else, and so probably the best you can hope for is that there are APIs that are available so that you can tie into them. You're faced with, all right, how do you provide standards when there aren't any right now? Obviously we've mentioned some. NIEM is a great transport. It's a great way to provide a set of standards, but everybody is going to have to work with that as we go forward. That's going to be your to be state as opposed to what your as is state is right now.

I think that there are opportunities, and you can make some very good recommendations for how this can be deployed rapidly, but then you're faced with, all right, in most of the cases, they're not there yet, so you would want to have some sort of, as you were going to go forward, you would want to look at some sort of service bus type of standards, so Web services that you can get, but these are all, sometimes they're available and sometimes they're not. And you'd want to look at that. You'd want to look at how do we want to, from a business standpoint, how do we want to protect the information and how to secure it. Then we can, once you have those business questions responded to, then obviously you can gear your systems to make sure that that is appropriate. I think you're sort of caught right now in the where we are now and where we want to get to. The where we want to get to is going to require a lot of work and a lot of changes in everybody's systems.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

We want to get there in a way that will minimize that as much as possible, Steve, so I think....

Steve Fletcher – State of Utah – Chief Information Officer

And I agree with that, so you can start to, as I said, start to put some of those standards in place, and so that everybody that starts to develop would be able to. You could try to now simplify the interfaces, how you're going to make that information more available so that we can all develop to a consistent set of interfaces, or so it's an easier development, and I think that's probably where we ought to focus on.

Anne Castro – BlueCross BlueShield South Carolina – Chief Design Architect

This is Anne Castro. Aneesh, just from my work on the standards committee, and the hard rode we had figuring out how to express standards, is that going to happen to us on this topic the same way?

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Yes.

Anne Castro – BlueCross BlueShield South Carolina – Chief Design Architect

Okay. So let me just tell everybody that my understanding or the experience I just went through was we could talk to we were blue in the face, but you cannot express standards in such ... the output of our group is going to be regulations, and it's difficult to put specific standards in regulations. Aneesh, do you follow where I'm going with this?

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Yes.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Anne, this is Claudia. I actually don't think it will be regulations.

Anne Castro – BlueCross BlueShield South Carolina – Chief Design Architect

Good. Good.

Claudia Williams – ONC

The assumption we're making is that the recommendations could be adopted by the Secretary, but not through a regulatory process.

Anne Castro – BlueCross BlueShield South Carolina – Chief Design Architect

So that we can be specific to the point where we say what a record format would look like, what the library of values are, the order of information, the method by which the transport is done, all of that can be stated specifically?

Claudia Williams – ONC

I guess the question to the group is whether that's the level of recommendation that's most –we have a question about, for us, about whether that's what we need, but I don't think there's a rulemaking limit to that.

Anne Castro – BlueCross BlueShield South Carolina – Chief Design Architect

Well, if there's no rulemaking method to that, what we need – I have a question, and that is, are we trying to make it be interoperable for all states to have the same interface? Or you either meet with everybody who hooks into something like this, or you create a standard and tell everybody to conform to it.

Claudia Williams – ONC

I think our not rip and replace principle suggests that we're looking for the low hanging fruit to move towards greater standardization, for instance, by aligning the three new interfaces that we'll need for ACA. But a question for the group, but if there's not an obvious lever to get to rapid standardization across the world except by mandating it be so and ripping and replacing, I'm guessing that would violate our first order principle.

Anne Castro – BlueCross BlueShield South Carolina – Chief Design Architect

Well, it doesn't have to be a rip and replace. It always has to acknowledge where the current level of capability is, but it can also state, if you're at this level, do it this way. If you're at a Web services level, do it this way. I mean, we have to acknowledge where they are today.

Lisa Pino – USDA – Deputy Administrator, SNAP

Hello. This is Lisa Pino from USDA, and I just want to jump in here. Obviously I can only speak about our program SNAP or food stamps, but we've been wrestling with this issue for quite some time, and one thing that we've recently instituted that we're excited about that is also responsive to the urgency because we've just seen for SNAP an increase in caseload in about 20% to 40% across states just in the last year, and they've been completely overwhelmed. So we have this thing called Partner Web, which is basically like a Web page just for our state partners. And within Partner Web, we've built a mini Web site that we use for best practices, and we were using it as a forum.

We can't mandate and tell states what specifications to use, but we're kind of using it as a barometer of, okay, for instance with something as simple as document imaging, here's a baseline approach of what specifically you should be looking at if you're going to institute a new document imaging system, and here are some examples of how to approach it. We've only done that in the last few months, and it's been a very simple way where at least we're trying to get a better sense of what's happening across state lines, but also to gently, but responsibly, encourage some consistency across state practices. I don't know if that helps at all, but that's just one approach that we've come up with recently in answer to this more complex question.

Cris Ross – LabHub – CIO

This is Cris Ross. I want to pick up on that theme, but also go back to, my colleague, Anne Castro's point because I think it's a good one, regardless of regulation. My question here is, if the goal is to minimize investment and keep costs low, if the goal is to meet all the policy objectives that were in the legislation, in an ideal world, you'd start with policy, and you'd then define architectures, and then you'd define standards, and clearly we can't do that here. It's more in reverse order that there's a certain tyranny of working code, and standards that are already in place that we need to work around.

My question, I think, for the group is, one, I think that there are some things, for example, architectures that we may need to exclude because they're simply not feasible, given the standards on the field. I don't know what those are, but as I've been listening to the conversation today, I've been trying to figure out, given these realities, can we really have a consumer mediated approach, for example? Does that still work, and do other architectures work? In other words, it seems to me that there's a process here where we need to trim out some potential architectural solutions as we go because the standards are simply going to eliminate some.

The second question that I've got is how important is it as a goal to have a consistent consumer experience from state-to-state? Again, as I've been listening today, it occurs to me that there are lots of wonderful things we could do where some states would be able to provide a much better experience to citizens, whereas in other states, the technology for a variety of reasons isn't there yet. And I haven't heard us discuss that in any of the venues so far, so I'd like to make sort of the point about architecture and then ask the question, how important is it that the consumer experience be essentially the same from state-to-state.

Rob Restuccia – Community Catalyst – Executive Director

This is Rob Restuccia from Community Catalyst. I think the answer to that question would be extremely difficult to be similar from state-to-state. I think we can offer similar things to states, but their capacity to take advantage of what's offered is going to be somewhat different.

M

It will be very difficult to have the same experience go state-to-state because that would require many states to change significantly with the way that they currently do business with their current systems and what not. I think that would be a huge challenge. Nevertheless, you could, from the exchange there, you could start to get that to be similar to be put up from state-to-state. But nevertheless, I think it's going to be very, very difficult to provide that just because of the different backend systems that are in place.

Deborah Bachrach – Bachrach Health Strategies – President

This is Deborah Bachrach. I think that we will be able to, as everyone said, have uniform experience across states, but I do think there can be minimum standards that all states will want to achieve because there is the final goal of facilitating enrollment into the full panoply of health insurance programs. And so

we may not do it the same way in each state, but the end result ought to be the same for consumers, that is, easy enrollment and reenrollment into health insurance.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

Again, the principle here is accepting the variability as a policy question. How might we make it as easy as possible for those who are capable of and have the policy authority to engage on these services? And so the spectrum of the recommendations we've had the conversation and nicely pointed out in the full standards committee, we talked more broadly about frameworks and not specific standards and regulations. But here there may be a gradation between what we advise SSA to consider how we evaluate, as Reed said, the low hanging fruit and make suggestions to make it as easy as possible for those who are capable of and willing to engage.

Sam, if you would continue us down the questions so we can keep us back on schedule here, so it seems to me we have somewhat of an agreement on the first point that we could conceivably see some improvement. We're having this conversation about should we or could we enable the reuse of information for consumers' needs. It was called for in the legislation, so it's a presumption that we should. We haven't had a good discussion about whether that relates to the bullet number four about whether this consumer mediated approach is viable to achieve that bullet number two, but we do, maybe we combine the conversation of four and two right now, and then we can go back to privacy and security. Sam, would you mind?

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Yes. Before we get to that, let me just raise another question about our principle of trying to avoid rip and replace, and to the point that was just made about the exchange. I have a hard time accepting that even though you all may be right that the consumer experience is going to be different across the country, I think that would be a terrific disservice to the citizens of the country to have the consumer experience be so different from state-to-state. I wouldn't want to be considered a victim of geography, so to speak.

The exchanges are going to be new entities, and we don't know at this point about how many states will choose to put up a single exchange or multiple exchanges or will rely on the federal exchange. But that is a function that doesn't exist today, so the idea of trying to simplify the data collection, the verification processes, the data reuse components, etc., at the exchange level, to me is an opportunity, particularly in this conversation about verification with federal systems. That's a separate question in many ways, at least I think, than how those exchanges will communicate with the legacy systems in their state.

In some cases, the exchange may be built on a legacy system. In other instances and again, we keep going back to this. These are policy decisions that we will try to enable. But I wouldn't want to just think about the challenges to connect to the legacy systems alone. Those could be intra-state issues. I'd just like a little bit of discussion on that point.

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

Ronan Rooney here, if I can jump in. I think it's been a really interesting discussion today. Obviously we focused very much on the data standards, like for example, NIEM and the interfaces. I think it might help the discussion to think a little bit about the process. I think you mentioned a minute ago, Sam, like what are we doing. What is doing the interfacing between the agencies and the federal systems and so on?

One of the concepts, I guess, that we've looked at before and developed, and I think it might be relevant here is the concept of a verification engine, for want of a better phrase, or a collateral engine, I guess some people ... would tend to call it as well. But you know the concept that you have a process that's capable of handling the verifications across an entire range of programs and over time so that when ...

state or a program within a state passes on some data to have it verified, rather than having that verification process living in 40 or 50 or maybe 100 different places, that it's actually consolidated into one location, one service.

M

And are you suggesting that that type of service could live at the exchange level?

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

Yes. That's exactly what I'm saying, and I think you could choose where you want to put it because I think that service should be able to handle verifications for multiple programs at multiple points in time, including kind of retrospective verifications that might have to be done. When I say retrospective verification, I mean there are a number of aspects to verification. One is the area we've been talking about today, which is can I call into SSA and verify that this is Ronan Rooney or whoever.

The second part is what's to understand before I make that call? What are the acceptable assets of verification or verification assets? Is it SSA? Is it somewhere else? Does it have to be a document of some sort?

Before we make the call to go and identify, shoot a Web service over to SSA or to EVVES or whatever, that I actually know that that's the right place to go for this particular piece of data or this client in the context of this program at this point in time. I think if all of those, the process that handles all of that complexity ends up in multiple places, we'd probably end up with a nightmare situation because it'll never be implemented the same way, and we get discrepancies and so on that will make the passing of the data between agencies and between states kind of a moot point because it won't necessarily be accurate.

Rose Trasatti – NAPHSIS – Project Manager

This is Rose Trasatti from NAPHSIS, and I know that similar concepts are being looked as part of Real ID and the multiple verification systems that the DMV offices need to query to process drivers license and ID applications is basically to have that same concept in place where they would just send a message or query to an engine that would then spawn off the queries to EVVES or to SSA or to Department of State or to SAVE, etc., and then gather the responses back so that the state DMV would just need that one interface and wouldn't have to interface with four or five different verification systems.

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

Correct. That's the exact...

Rose Trasatti – NAPHSIS – Project Manager

That concept has been explored in other arenas as well.

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

Yes. So I think that's something we should potentially explore. I know we're running short on time here. I don't want to delay it. I can document something and just maybe send it on to Claudia, and then she can circulate it or whatever.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Maybe just talking a – Ronan, when you think about the verification engine, what would be the kinds of things we could put forward? One is just putting forward the concepts, obviously, but what would be the interfaces that would need? What would be the standards needed to build that out or to suggest how that should be operationalized?

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

I can write up something on that and send it to you with some suggestions, and you could circulate it, but I think, at a high level, I guess the verification engine would probably just expect, as input from a SAVE, like I need to verify this date of birth, or I need to verify this name that this is the right client, or I need to verify this income. I think what the engine would expect is a data item or a set of data items that need to be verified at the program or set of programs that it needs to be verified for because each of the programs, as you know, have different verification requirements. And the other thing, I think, it would want to be passed in will be the period for which the verification is required because, again, before we go to SSA or somewhere to make a request, the type of verification will vary over time by program. So the engine needs to handle all that, otherwise all of the is going to have been passed out, and everybody is going to implement this 100 times, which seems a bit crazy.

M

Ronan, are you suggesting that this could be a two-way interface that once that verification is done and the determinations are made that a similar engine, single engine approach routes the information, the eligibility packet of information to the programs or health plans?

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

Yes, exactly.

M

That ... appropriate?

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

Exactly. Again, I think that the term we would use for that is an evidence broker, and to a lot ... discussion, which I have to say, again, was very instructive and informative, and thank you for the people who presented. I think, for example, the thing that came up multiple times, I guess, was trying to keep it simple, and I think Aneesh and Sam kind of drove that down from the very first meeting. And the idea, like behind an evidence broker, is that you use a very simple publish and subscribe model, so in other words, rather than trying to have all sorts of complexity and everybody understanding everybody else, I can say, if I'm say, TANF or SNAP or whatever, CHIP, I can say look. Here are the evidence areas that I'm interested in.

In other words, if any of these things get changed or verified, I want to know about it. And then each program can do the same thing, but they can just state that, and then the evidence broker will be concerned with when it gets a change of data or it updates some data or a verification updates, it'll see who has asked for those updates, and obviously prior to that message is the consent aspect. So ... consent, and somebody having asked for it, then they would just be notified, so it's a very simple – technically, it's a very simple model. But I think that's what we're trying to look for here is something that's easy to implement and simple to process.

M

Gopal, does this work in your state environment?

W

I'm not sure Gopal is on the line, but we have Ruth. We have Steve Fletcher.

M

Steve, yes?

Steve Fletcher – State of Utah – Chief Information Officer

If you're going to ask me, no, I'm very much in favor of that as a way to go forward. As Ronan says, it's simple, and it puts some structure in the process, as you go forward, but it's a fairly simple process. Yes, I would be very much in favor of that.

John Roessler – USCIS DHS – Chief SAFE Program

This is John Roessler from the DHS SAVE program. I think it's important to note that we, as one of our colleagues described earlier, have a relationship with a similar project under Real ID with a contractor providing the information to the states. Now our relationship though, and it's important to note, is with the states, so it's an agency-to-agency with the DMVs relationship, so the information, third party information sharing. Depending on how, what we've termed this as a hub to some degree, is set up, if all the partners on the hub can share information outside of, like, a third party entity, through a third party entity, then I would have to note that currently we do not do that. We do not provide information to the third party. We provide it to the state who, through contract, then is able to work, provide certain data back to other players. So that's important to note as the construct comes together around a hub and who gets the data and how we share that.

Another thing to note is that we do not, as I said in my brief earlier, provide a red light, green light, as much as we provide a status back. And there is, if the information is not found, a back and forth model in place right now that allows a person to continue that query until they get resolution to really determine the status of the individual. That does add some complexity, so I'd keep that in mind, as you go forward. Again, immigration law is very complex, so it does lend to this complexity. Then when we end up trying to build solutions in the system, so we definitely want to be involved around discussions so that you have all the information you need going forward. Thank you.

Claudia Williams – ONC

This is Claudia. I'm just wondering, Ronan, to your really interesting idea. If we put that up against the B2B in the consumer mediated model for a minute, it would seem to me that the hub – I guess the question to the group would be, could you imagine supporting that under either of those models, and what would that look like?

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

If I can give you an initial quick response, and then leave it open to the group, I mean, I think that if you just imagine for a minute that the consumer is just another interested party in that data, and there's no reason why they couldn't be accommodated in the same model.

Claudia Williams – ONC

I guess I was actually more concerned about the B2B because, innate to the B2B is that you've tightly defined the data and use for it, and that also creates, you know, both benefits and constraints. In this hub model, unless there's sort of an option for a more distributed architecture, which gets us probably further down the line than we need to be in defining it, it approximately the complexity of the policy framework you would need for like a query, HIE model, for instance. While I think it's simple in some respects, I think it's complicated in others because you have to have sort of imagined all the uses and have standards for those and policies for those in place.

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

I think somebody mentioned earlier on as well that there's a relatively small amount of data that we're concerned about here, and we're probably not talking in terms of the verification piece. We're not talking about like thousands of items of data, so it may well be possible to implement the complexity that you're talking about in a kind of table driven manner rather than have to implement policies in terms of code. I

think that's something we could maybe take as an outline discussion. But obviously if anybody else has ideas there, I'm certainly open to them.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

This is Henry. I think it would be good to have maybe an offline kind of an architect/engineering kind of a session together where we kind of discuss kind of what are the alternatives that are involved in some given set of use cases. Then maybe come back to the larger group, and then be able to propose and to try to respond to, I think, most certainly probably not all the issues that were raised today, but at least kind of tighten up a little bit about a more complete picture in terms of the set of solutions.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Henry, I think that's a fabulous idea, so let's try to make that happen.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Let's use that as a segue to go to slide 27, our next steps, because we envisioned, out of this discussion, having to break ourselves up into a couple of working groups and to potentially have some one-time sessions to address some really focused issues. I'm going to ask Claudia to take us through that, but let's start with Henry's suggestion, and I'm going to suggest, Henry, that you ask that you co-convene that for us.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Yes.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Maybe that ties into, Claudia, with the standards working group that we started to discuss.

Henry Chao – CMS – CTO

Yes, and I think Gina Garza would be very interested in kind of co-chairing that with me.

Gina Garza – IRS – Associate CIO, Applications Development

Thanks, Henry.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Before everyone gasps before the 4th of July weekend, let me just say, we took great liberties here in putting your names on paper, understanding how quickly we needed to move, so of course get back to us if that doesn't seem possible. But otherwise, we will know that everyone has been super engaged and willing to send forward. Let me also clarify that we, of course, would schedule these and staff these so that your job is to help frame the issues and come up with some more focused recommendations.

I will say, the first one on standardizing business rules was responding to our conversations from the last meeting where I think there was a desire to have a standard way of expressing business rules, so I'm not sure. Maybe others could chime in here. I'm not sure it's exactly the same issue that Henry just raised about the sort of hub model for verification. Might I suggest that we keep them separate for now and see if they're the same, but let others chime in and see what they think?

M

Ronan, were you suggesting? I think I thought I heard you suggest that the same kind of hub models, and I wasn't exactly sure you called it a hub, but the model you were suggesting of an engine to do the verification. You were also, I thought, suggesting a similar type of engine to do the business rules.

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

Yes. Correct. Again, I guess the terminology I'd use for that would be an eligibility and entitlement engine.

M

Yes.

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

Yes. Absolutely.

M

Yes, we don't use the entitlement word in this country so easily.

Ronan Rooney – Curam Software – CTO & Cofounder

No....

Claudia Williams – ONC

Let me....

W

Can I ask a question on that? Are you exploring ... products that are already available on the market, or are you trying to define standards for a custom solution ... on the business rules?

Claudia Williams – ONC

First of all, I don't think we're going to be able to come up with a specificity of a particular, so we're trying to just say for a product that might exist, what are the minimum set of standards that are needed to express business rules.

W

Okay.

Claudia Williams – ONC

If that makes sense – so let me just suggest something. I think it would make sense to focus a group on the immediate questions that were teed up today knowing that we're maybe going to need to rotate to looking at business rules. As a starting place, what if we initiate this group, and I think Ronan – Deborah, we put your name on, but you can – and I think Henry and Gina also have expressed an interest in this. And let's focus first on this concept of verification engine and some of the other architectural models that we discussed today, and then we can move that group on to discuss some of the business rules issues, as we resolve them. I think the model here would be the group would be a sort of tiger team to come back with the set of more focused recommendations for us to consider and adopt.

The second document intersects with the first, but I think it's a little different, and this speaks to the really pretty rich conversation we had today about real time access, Web services models, how would you create a closed environment for that and, frankly, how do you mediate between the desire to move in that direction on the one hand and the variable ability to act on that at the states on the other. So I think this group could tee up solid recommendations around what might be the way to peg standards recommendations for different levels that states are in, but moving in this direction.

Might I suggest that it would be great to have an IRS perspective there and, frankly, a perspective from other sort of verification owners who are moving in this direction? So I would definitely want to tee up not only Bryan and Oren, but also Gina, maybe you guys, to think about that a little bit.

Gina Garza – IRS – Associate CIO, Applications Development

Yes.

Claudia Williams – ONC

Please understand that we will send out an e-mail after this call and ask for folks to tee themselves up to be on these, so don't feel like you have to raise your hand right now. We'll get back to you.

W

I'm assuming that it would be permissible to send someone in our stead who probably has more knowledge as far as the technical components. Would that be okay?

Claudia Williams – ONC

That would be fine. I guess I would just want to rely on you to bring them up to speed on what's the questions we're asking. In other words, help them understand the job that we're doing and what we're.... Those were the two main working groups we thought might need multiple sessions and focus. There were two others that we were hopeful we could tackle in more short order, but obviously if there's a need for more than one session, that's great, and we will support that. The first is privacy and security requirements, and I think we got quite a bit of input on this today, and so we'll be twisting the arms of several of you who volunteered information during the call today, and I think the three domains that we tee up are transport authentication and ID resolution would be the three I would recommend we focus on.

The second one is the question that was raised last call about the handoff with health plans and around benefit selection. We have not lost that idea. I want to be sure we can tee up at least a focus session to think about what the requirements are, and we'll be doing that one as well. So we will be back to you early next week with an e-mail saying, you know, we'll verify ... participation, and asking folks to please step forward and help us in one of these areas.

In addition, there was a lot of interest in the last call in having more understanding of background on some of the existing systems that do the functionality we're talking about. One of those systems is One EF, and we have our consultant, the two directors ... solutions that have stood that up in several states, Bobby Wilbur and Claudia Paige, and they have generously offered to do two Webinars, and we'll get back to you with the call in information. Also, I think, Ronan, we're talking to you about Curam, and ... is a third one, a bit more of a benefits engine, I believe, but it will offer some important insights for us as well, so we'll again be back to you with dates and times for those.

Sam Karp – California HealthCare Foundation – Chief Program Officer

Let me just clear that ONC is going to staff and do the scheduling for these working groups, so don't worry about having to take on that responsibility. Just before we close, Claudia, do you want to say something about how we're going to assess dates for an in-person meeting?

Claudia Williams – ONC

Yes. Two things, and if anyone wants to come work for ONC, please let me know, or if you know anyone who does. We're trying to stay a step ahead of this process and, with any luck, we will. Our next meeting is July 15th from 11:00 to 2:00. But in addition, I think there was a great interest in having an in-person

meeting in the next month or so. August, we had mentioned, but what I want to suggest is in our next set of communications with you.

I will – if Judy can indulge us and ask two things: one, we'll give you the dates for the next meetings, and indicate for which meetings would you be available to travel to D.C., and for which meetings are you simply not going to be available because we need to be able to maybe reschedule or just tee things up differently. So we will be back to you with a specific calendar ... around both of those issues: A, whether you can make it or not and, B, whether you could come to D.C. for a longer session. We'll look forward to getting those responses back and try to tee up an in-person meeting as soon as we can.

I realize we are also to have public input, so why don't we open up the – I'll let Judy. I'll hand it over to Judy now for that.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Yes. Operator, could you open up the line for any public comment? Just a reminder to state your name, your organization, and it's a two-minute time limit, please.

Operator

(Instructions given.)

M

Do we have anyone on the line who would like to offer public comments? Now is the time to do it.

Operator

We do not have any public comments at this time.

Judy Sparrow – Office of the National Coordinator – Executive Director

Great. Thank you.

Aneesh Chopra – White House – CTO

We wore them out. It was a long call, but productive. Happy 4th of July, everybody, and thank you so very much for your time.