

eHealth Council
December 7, 2023
9:30 a.m. CT – 10:45 a.m. CT
Nebraska Hospital Association
3255 Salt Creek Circle, Lincoln, NE 68504
Please e-mail anne.byers@nebraska.gov to receive the Zoom Link.

Tentative Agenda

Links to agendas, minutes, and meeting materials can be found at
http://www.nitc.nebraska.gov/ehealth_council/meetings/index.html

Tentative Agenda

9:30	Roll Call Notice of Posting of Agenda Notice of Nebraska Open Meetings Act Posting Review and approve October 14, 2022 and March 31, 2022 minutes* Public Comment
9:35	Review and Comments on Draft Digital Opportunities Plan .
10:00	Updates from Members
10:30	Future of the eHealth Council
10:45	Adjourn

*Denotes action item.

[Nebraska Open Meetings Act](#)

The eHealth Council will attempt to adhere to the sequence of the published agenda, but reserves the right to adjust the order and timing of items and may elect to take action on any of the items listed.

Meeting announcement and agenda was posted on the Nebraska Public Meeting website on Dec. 5, 2023.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/99190384361>

Meeting ID: 991 9038 4361

Passcode: 182973

Or Dial by your location

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eHEALTH COUNCIL
Friday, October 14, 2022 9:30 a.m. CT
Nebraska Hospital Association, Board Room

3255 Salt Creek Circle
Lincoln, NE 68504
MINUTES

ROLL CALL NOTICE OF POSTING OF AGENDA NOTICE OF NEBRASKA OPEN MEETINGS ACT POSTING

Mr. Fattig called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. There were six voting members present in person at the time of roll call. A quorum was not present. Meeting notices were posted on the State of Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar website on Sept. 1 and NITC websites on Sept. 2, 2022. The meeting agenda was posted on October 7, 2022. The agenda included a link to Nebraska's public meeting law and a copy was available on the table.

Members Present: Kevin Borchert, Kathy Cook, Marty Fattig, Cindy Kadavy, Dave Palm, and Jina Ragland.

Members Present via Video (Non-Voting): Brian Sterud and Anne Turman

Members Absent: Gary Cochran, Jan Evans, Dr. Jim McClay, Alison Wisco, and Linda Wittmuss.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 31, 2022 MINUTES*

Approval of the minutes was tabled.

CYNCHHEALTH UPDATE

Kevin Borchert and Robert Wagner, CynchHealth

Kevin Borchert and Robert Wagner gave an update on CynchHealth. A few highlights are listed below:

- 42 hospitals accounting for 59% of the state's hospital beds have implemented PDMP workflow integration.
- 610 facilities are now live.
- CynchHealth continues to make investments in IT security and is completing HITRUST certification. CynchHealth expects to receive the certification by the end of November.
- The MyCynchHealth patient portal is available for Medicaid patients. The portal is at [Mycynchealth.org](https://mycynchealth.org).

Anne Byers asked if CynchHealth has considered internet access as a social determinant of health. Robert Wagner said that he would put Anne in touch with Joy Doll.

BROADBAND AND DIGITAL EQUITY FUNDING UPDATE

Anne Byers

Both the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) included programs which could be used for broadband. An interagency working group, The Connect Nebraska Working Group, is coordinating the administration of federal broadband programs.

Nebraska will receive at least \$100 million for broadband infrastructure projects from the IIJA Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment (BEAD) Program. In order to receive the implementation funds, the State will need to submit a 5-year broadband deployment action plan. States will be required to engage

stakeholders in the development of the plan. The Nebraska Public Service Commission will be administering the BEAD funding and expects to receive its planning funding in October.

Nebraska will receive \$600,000 to develop a state digital equity plan through the IJJA State Digital Equity Capacity Planning Grant Program. States which complete and submit a digital equity plan can apply for at least \$7.2 million over 5 years to distribute through a state digital equity grant program. States will be required to engage stakeholders in the development of the plan. The Nebraska Information Technology Commission/Office of the CIO will be administering the State Digital Equity Plan

States are required to address the needs of eight covered populations:

- Rural residents
- Older adults
- Members of ethnic or racial minorities
- Members of low-income households
- Those with language barriers
- Individuals with disabilities
- Veterans
- Incarcerated individuals

The grant will also promote the use of technologies such as telehealth and precision agriculture which will grow Nebraska's economy and improve the lives of Nebraskans.

eHealth Council members discussed ways to measure telehealth usage in the state and possible barriers to telehealth use. CPT codes capture telehealth use. Medicare Managed Care Organizations may have data on telehealth use. Cindy Kadavy offered to work with Anne to find out barriers to using telehealth by long-term care facilities possibly through a webinar or a poll. Marty, Cindy, and Kevin volunteered to work with Anne.

MEMBERSHIP

Dr. McClay has taken a new position as CRIO at the University of Missouri. He recommended that Dr. Hossain Liaquat, the CyncHealth Endowed Professor at UNK be considered as a member.

Paul Hakenkamp is no longer with CyncHealth. Jaime Bland recommended Robert Wagner represent CyncHealth on the eHealth Council.

Todd Searls has taken another position and has resigned.

Francie McNeil has also taken another position. She may still be interested in participating in the future.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

eHEALTH COUNCIL
Thursday, March 31, 2022 1:30-3:30 p.m. CT
Nebraska Hospital Association, Board Room
and Via Videoconferencing
3255 Salt Creek Circle
Lincoln, NE 68504
MINUTES

ROLL CALL NOTICE OF POSTING OF AGENDA NOTICE OF NEBRASKA OPEN MEETINGS ACT POSTING

Mr. Fattig called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. There were eleven voting members present at the time of roll call. A quorum existed to conduct official business. Meeting notices were posted on the State of Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar and NITC websites on March 4, 2022. The meeting agenda was posted on March 24, 2022. The agenda included a link to Nebraska's public meeting law and was available on the table.

Members Present: Kevin Borchert, Kathy Cook, Marty Fattig, Paul Hakenkamp, Cindy Kadavy, Dr. Jim McClay, Francie McNeil, Ashley Newmyer, Dave Palm, Jina Ragland, and Brian Sterud

Members Absent: Gary Cochran, Jan Evans, Todd Searls, Anna Turman, Alison Wisco, and Linda Wittmuss.

APPROVAL OF May 11, 2021 MINUTES*

There were no corrections to the minutes. Cindy Kadavy moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Dave Palm seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Borchert-Yes; Cook-Yes; Fattig-Yes; Hakenkamp-Yes; Kadavy-Yes; McClay-Abstaining; McNeil-Abstaining; Newmyer-Yes; Palm-Yes; Ragland-Yes; and Sterud-Yes;. Results: Yes-9, No-0, and Abstaining-2. Motion carried.

MEMBERSHIP

There were no new member nominations.

CYNCEALTH UPDATE

Kevin Borchert and Paul Hakenkamp, CyncHealth

CyncHealth is taking steps to improve the health data in Nebraska. Steps include:

- Moving to full Certified Qualified Entity status to obtain Medicare claims data for public reporting
- Recertifying National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) Data Aggregator Validation (DAV) program and adding Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC's) to existing sites
- Writing a second Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) measure and moving the existing Transportation Measure to next level review
- Facilitating interoperability, Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS), and regulatory reporting utilizing CyncHealth

Pharmacy Informatics Accomplishments and Goals include:

- Improved provisioning process with Salesforce
- Interoperability

- Sharing data with 20 states
- PDMP workflow integration into 36 hospitals and 4 pharmacies
 - 34% of Hospitals
 - 57.2% (3,972/6,944) Hospital beds
- Data integrity
- ONC Data Quality Framework patient matching project
- Education/learning opportunities

The My CyncHealth patient portal is currently in alpha testing. It will include COVID-19 vaccination information, medication history, lab results and immunization records. The patient portal will be available in English and Spanish. It will include social and community resources and referrals. The patient portal will be available to those 18 years and older.

CyncHealth is working HITrust certification and expects to receive it this fall.

BryanHealth and Faith Regional are in the process of connecting to CyncHealth.

NDHHS— USE OF HEALTH IT AND DATA FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE

Felicia Quintana-Zinn, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Public Health is modernizing the public health data infrastructure to make it more accessible. Felicia Quintana-Zinn shared information from the Department of Health and Human Service's COVID-19 response website at <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>. Genomic surveillance and wastewater surveillance information is now available.

The Public Health Atlas <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Nebraska-Public-Health-Atlas.aspx> currently includes two dashboards:

- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Dashboard
- Nebraska Hospital Capacity and Respiratory Illness Dashboard

The Data Atlas will be growing to show genomic and wastewater surveillance data. The Division of Public Health is also working to make interactive Information from vital records available.

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT COVID-19 RESPONSE

Kathy Cook, Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department implemented the COVID-19 dashboard in March 2020. The health department also used news releases, press conferences and social media to keep the public informed. The risk dial was useful in communicating with the public. The health department worked with cultural centers for testing and getting information out. Information was translated into five or six languages.

An online request system for PPE was implemented. The department followed up with requestors to discuss options when supplies were not sufficient. Over 5.5 million items were distributed. The department also set-up an ultraviolet germicidal irradiation disinfection service for N95 masks.

The health department worked with our City of Lincoln Information Services staff to develop a comprehensive COVID-19 Vaccination Application which handled:

- Registration

- Scheduling vaccinations
- Check-in and administration of vaccine
- Upload to NESIIS
- Inventory management

Over 230,350 vaccinations were given at 461 clinics.

FEDERAL BROADBAND AND DIGITAL EQUITY FUNDING AND STATE BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT AND DIGITAL EQUITY PLANS

Anne Byers

Both the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) included programs which could be used for broadband.

Nebraska will receive at least \$100 million for broadband infrastructure projects from the IIJA Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment (BEAD) Program. In order to receive the implementation funds, the State will need to submit a 5-year broadband deployment action plan. States will be required to engage stakeholders in the development of the plan. The Notice of Funding Opportunity will be available in mid-May.

Nebraska will receive \$300,000 to develop a state digital equity plan through the IIJA State Digital Equity Capacity Planning Grant Program. States which complete and submit a digital equity plan can apply for at least \$7.2 million over 5 years to distribute through a state digital equity grant program. States will be required to engage stakeholders in the development of the plan. The Notice of Funding Opportunity will be available in mid-June.

ROLE OF EHEALTH COUNCIL IN SUPPORTING DIGITAL EQUITY AND BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT

Anne Byers suggested that the eHealth Council could play a role in the development of the state broadband deployment and digital equity plans. Internet access is needed for telehealth and health monitoring applications. It is also considered to be one of the social determinants of health. Members expressed interest in participating in the planning processes. Anne Byers said that she would send out information on the funding programs. When more information is available, Anne Byers will draft an action item for inclusion in the NITC's statewide technology plan and send to members via e-mail.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

NEBRASKA

A thick, curved yellow line that starts under the 'N', goes under the 'E', 'B', 'R', 'A', 'S', and ends under the 'K' and 'A'.

Draft

Nebraska Digital Opportunities Plan

December 4, 2023



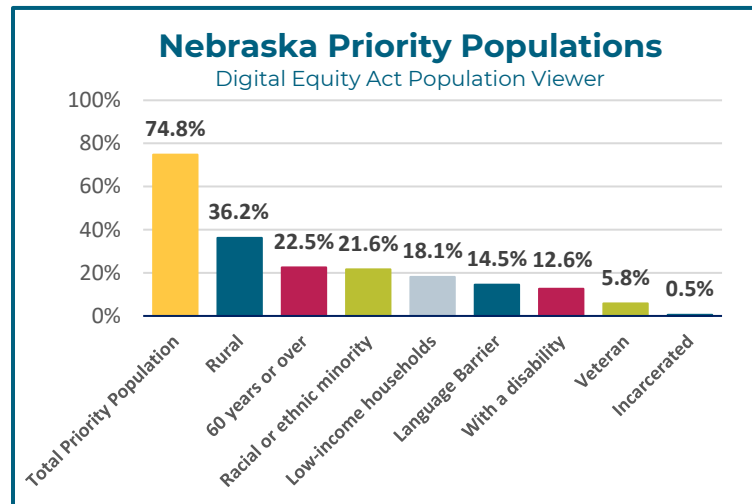


1 Executive Summary

Nebraska Digital Opportunities Plan

Nebraska's Digital Opportunities Plan was developed with funding from the NTIA State Digital Equity Planning Grant. States which complete plans and have them approved by the NTIA will be eligible to apply for funding from the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program to implement their plans and set up a state digital opportunities grant program. Nebraska's Digital Opportunities Plan is for the majority of Nebraskans and focuses on eight covered populations:

- Rural residents
- Those 60 years or over
- Members of racial or ethnic minorities
- Members of low-income households
- Individuals with language barriers
- Individuals with a disability
- Veterans
- Incarcerated individuals



The chart above shows the percent of population of each covered population in Nebraska. Altogether, members of these eight covered populations comprise nearly 75% of Nebraska's population.

Needs Assessment

Broadband Availability

- Broadband availability and affordability were the two issues most frequently identified by participants in listening sessions across Nebraska.
- 86.9% of Nebraska locations and 67.8% of rural Nebraska locations have broadband of at least 100 Mbps down and 20 Mbps up according to the Nebraska Broadband Office (August 2023).

Broadband Availability for Agriculture

Broadband is important for agriculture. Farmers and ranchers need upload speeds of 50-100+ Mbps to transfer the immense amount of data generated to the cloud. In the future even greater upload speeds may be required.

Broadband Adoption

- To be fully connected in today's digital economy and society, most individuals need two kinds of connectivity: mobile and fixed connectivity. Nearly one-third of Nebraskans have no internet connectivity or only one kind of connectivity.
- Residents of rural areas and urban areas with high percentages of low-income households have lower rates of internet access at home. Members of covered populations also have lower rates of internet access at home.
- Even though rural areas and urban areas with high percentages of low-income households may differ in demographics and challenges, they express similar needs related to broadband access, including:
 - The ability for businesses to grow in the community
 - The need for older adults to access health care through telehealth
 - The need for broadband for completing homework and accessing online classes
 - The desire for their children to have opportunities to stay in their communities

Recognizing that similarities exist between rural areas and low-income urban areas with high percentages of members of ethnic and racial minorities may aid in building statewide support for digital opportunities initiatives.

Broadband Affordability

A discount of \$30 per month for low-income households is currently being provided through the FCC Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Residents of tribal lands and those in high-cost areas can receive \$75 per month in support. Some participating telecommunications providers also offer discounted digital devices. Nearly 89,000 households out of 284,439 eligible households (31%) in Nebraska have enrolled in the program.

Digital Devices

Approximately 7.2% of Nebraska household have no digital device. To be fully connected, most individuals need a mobile and large screen device. Approximately 20% of Nebraska households have no digital devices or only one digital device.

Residents of rural areas and census tracts with a high percent of low-income households have lower rates of device access. Approximately 26.4% of rural Nebraska residents have either no device or one type of device versus 16.8% of residents of urban residents.

Digital Skills

Most Nebraskans are very confident or somewhat confident in their ability to complete tasks using the internet. Respondents to the Nebraska Digital Access and Skills Survey were asked to indicate how confident they were at completing 11 internet tasks. Members of many covered populations were generally less confident in their ability to complete tasks.

Privacy and Security

Fewer Nebraskans are very confident in their ability to use privacy and security practices. Respondents to the Nebraska Digital Access and Skills Survey were most confident in using strong passwords with 47% feeling very confident.

Assets

Nebraska has many assets which can be leveraged to increase digital opportunities in the state. A few assets are listed below.

- Do Space is a technology library in Omaha, providing free access to the latest software, devices, and ultra-fast internet. A variety of programs and events are offered at no cost.
- The Center for People EduTech program prepares students in Lincoln for a career in technology using the EduTech curriculum developed by Google.
- The Digital Express located on Metropolitan Community College's North Omaha campus is open to everyone and offers technology checkout and support, low-cost technology repair, and basic technology programs/training.
- The Nebraska Tech Collaborative, AIM Institute, Nebraska Chamber's Tech Nebraska, and Prairie STEM are working to build Nebraska's technology workforce and tech ecosystem.
- The Nebraska Career Scholarship program provides scholarships to students at the University of Nebraska, Nebraska state colleges, community colleges or private postsecondary institutions pursuing degrees in programs of study leading to high wage, high-skill, and high-demand careers.
- The University of Nebraska system, state colleges, community colleges and private colleges offer a number of technology-related courses and degrees.
- Libraries are key community partners in promoting digital opportunities across the state. Nebraska has 273 public libraries with 78% of libraries having a service population size of 2,499 or less. Many smaller libraries are limited in their ability to engage in digital access and literacy services by a lack of fiber connectivity and staff time.
- Nebraska's 145 multi-purpose senior centers can be a resource for older adults. Approximately two-thirds of the state's senior centers provide Wi-Fi access.
- The state's economic development districts are actively involved in regional digital opportunities planning.

Vision

Nebraska will grow its economy and improve the lives of Nebraskans by ensuring that Nebraskans have access to affordable, quality broadband, appropriate devices and the skills to use technologies at home, in school, on the farm or ranch, in businesses, in health care, and in government.

Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: Increase the percent of Nebraska households with affordable, quality broadband service available (in conjunction with BEAD)

Strategy: Utilize funding from BEAD and other sources to ensure that broadband is available at all locations in Nebraska

Goal 2: Increase the percent of Nebraska households with a broadband subscription at home

Strategy: Increase awareness and utilization of the Affordable Connectivity Program by developing and strengthening partnerships

Goal 3: Improve internet access in Nebraska libraries and senior centers

Strategy: Increase the number of libraries with fiber connections and network infrastructure upgrades

Strategy: Increase the number of libraries applying for E-Rate

Strategy: Encourage and support libraries in utilizing the E-Rate Special Construction Matching Program

Strategy: Support efforts to improve internet access in Nebraska senior centers

Goal 4: Increase the percent of Nebraska households with an appropriate internet device

Strategy: Review Nebraska Statutes and policies to identify barriers to state entities donating digital devices to refurbishment programs and to make recommendations for addressing these barriers

Strategy: Encourage and support the development or expansion of programs which refurbish and repair digital devices and/or distribute new devices to members of covered populations

Goal 5: Improve the technology skills of Nebraskans including the development of a skilled workforce

Strategy: Encourage and support the development or expansion of programs which provide digital skills training and support to covered populations and support the development of a skilled workforce

Goal 6: Increase the use of telehealth technologies in Nebraska in order to increase access to care in underserved areas and to reduce health disparities

Strategy: Support efforts by Nebraska hospitals, health care providers, associations and other stakeholders to increase the use of telehealth in Nebraska

Goal 7: Increase the use of precision agriculture technologies in Nebraska

Strategy: Support efforts by the Nebraska Farm Bureau, Nebraska farmers and ranchers and other stakeholders to increase the use of precision agriculture in Nebraska

Goal 8: Increase awareness and adoption of internet privacy and security practices by local governments in Nebraska

Strategy: Assist local governments in implementing cyber governance and planning, increasing assessment and evaluation capabilities, prioritizing identified cyber risks, and helping to address cyber workforce changes through the Nebraska State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP)

Goal 9: Increase awareness and adoption of internet privacy and security practices by Nebraskans

Strategy: Support the development or expansion of privacy and security training programs for Nebraskans

Goal 10: Improve the online accessibility and inclusivity of public resources and services

Strategy: Increase awareness of accessibility issues with state agencies and local governments including accessibility of PDFs