

Civitas Networks for Health 2023 Advocacy Agenda and Activities

Civitas Networks for Health aims to affirm the role of its members in the nationwide health improvement and interoperability landscapes to aid in community, population, and public health advancement, further health equity, and improve health outcomes. The goal is to build partnerships, influence funding and legislation, as well as advocate for regulatory actions that support Civitas members' critical work in the communities they serve. The Civitas national network is well positioned to be a trusted resource to decision makers. Civitas members bring forward significant insights from their local jurisdictions. They are subject matter experts and are versed in data-led multi-stakeholder approaches to improvement efforts and data exchange.

2023 Priorities and Key Activities

1. **Educate and advise federal policymakers and regulators about Civitas members and their significance to the nation's public health systems, health care and health data infrastructure.**
 - a. Meet and engage with key congressional policymakers to garner support for health equity-enabling health improvement work, and health IT infrastructure and data exchange.
 - i. Continue to serve as an educational resource to Capitol Hill for our industry.
 - b. Develop and build Civitas policy champions, including Board of Directors, Government Relations and Advocacy Council members, and engaged Civitas members.

2. **Support the advancement of the Health Data Utility Concept to broaden opportunities for facilitating information flow between public health, community health, and clinical/claims health IT systems while protecting privacy and ensuring security.** HDUs are models with cooperative leadership, designated authority, and the advanced technical capabilities to combine, enhance, and exchange electronic health data across care and service settings for treatment, care coordination, quality improvement, and community and public health purposes. HDUs leverage existing infrastructure through collaboration with state and regional HIEs and other health data collaboratives.
 - a. Foster and build relationships and champions (at least 35 congressional meetings with members and staff, including personal offices and committees of jurisdiction)
 - i. Target congressional committees with jurisdiction over HDU—including Senate HELP, Senate Finance, House Energy and Commerce, House Ways and Means, and House and Senate Appropriations— committee members, and personal offices interested in the HDU concept and health data exchange.
 - b. Support HDU through the FY24 Appropriations process and Community Project Funding (earmarks)

- c. Support HDU through the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) Reauthorization
- 3. Engage with the Biden Administration to build support for related policy positions and regulatory actions.**
- a. HHS Office of the Secretary on overarching policy interests
 - i. HDU
 - ii. Health equity
 - iii. SDOH and addressing social needs
 - b. CMS – support legislative proposals and models identified by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services’ Innovation Center that drive accountable care, advance health equity and address health care affordability
 - c. AHRQ – Increase recognition for all-payer claims databases and their value
 - d. ONC - general interoperability efforts and position Civitas as experts
 - e. CDC – engage with new director of external affairs (once hired) within the CDC’s COS office (external partnerships are receiving special attention in CDC’s restructuring)
 - f. ASPR – introduce the concept of HDU to the appropriate officials and update on Civitas activity to date
 - g. Contribute local, regional, and state perspectives on regulatory comment letters and responses to Administration requests.
- 4. Affirm the role of Civitas’ members in the nationwide health improvement and interoperability landscapes through coordinating activities.**
- a. Coordinate meetings on Hill, staffer briefings, meetings with select agency officials and the Administration.
 - b. Annual Conference in August: support keynote speaker requests and participation in conference building off previous years.
 - c. Other events: speaking engagements, panels, hearings, briefings.
- 5. Deliver ongoing education and support on applicable federal policy. Ensure member participation and engagement in Civitas’ advocacy efforts.**
- a. Host quarterly briefings with updates from DC.
 - b. Distribute regular memos to members on policy topics of interest.
 - c. Address requests from Civitas members that bolster their local activities while contributing to collective impact on aligned areas of interest.
- 6. Create resources and identify activities that further Civitas’ Advocacy Agenda**
- a. Reference successes and maximize legislative wins - push language to agencies and get continued support from the Hill for passed language.
 - b. Build industry partnerships by engaging other community stakeholders and industry leaders in support for various policy positions and regulatory actions where there is alignment.
 - c. Provide feedback, comments, and respond to requests for information (RFIs) on other legislative opportunities such as but not limited to privacy, cybersecurity, telehealth, health workforce development etc.