



Metasteward LLC

Looking at health information technology (HIT) through the "donut hole"!

- [e-OlderAmerican Blog](#)
- [Mission](#)
- [HITSP.org](#)
- + [add link](#)

Suggestion: Right click and open each hyperlink in a "New Tab". Links having (or soon to have) content are identified with an *.

- [2010 *](#)
- [2009 *](#)
- [2008 *](#)
- [2006-2007 *](#)
- [2005-2006](#)
- [2001-2005](#)
- [1998-2001 *](#)
- [1996-1998](#)
- [1994-1996 *](#)
- [1987-1994 *](#)
- [1976-1987](#)
- [1970-1976 *](#)
- [1965-1970](#)
- [1960-1965](#)
- [1956-1960](#)
- [1935-1956 *](#)

+ [add link](#)

Welcome to the Metasteward LLC Web site!

Message from the President and CEO

July 1, 2010

It's now been a year and a half since I initiated my Web site and what a time it has been related to health information technology. Passage of the Health Information for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) has resulted in unprecedented advances in specifying both existing and yet to be developed interoperability standards for electronic health records.

Passage of HR3950 the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 has started to close the "donut hole". This year the coverage gap will begin to be addressed with \$250 tax free checks. In 2011 drug manufacturers will discount 50% of the cost of brand-name drugs purchased in the coverage gap. The "donut hole" will be closed by 2020. The Food and Drug Administration is authorized to approve generic versions of biologic drugs which could mean enormous savings for persons in the treatment of conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and psoriasis.

My interest in standards, particularly related to health and social services information technology, has extended over a period of many years. By virtue of Webcasts and telephone conferences I have been able to directly participate as a member of the U.S. Health Information Technology Standards Panel (HITSP) in specifying standards for healthcare information systems that will personally benefit me and many others who are, or will be, senior citizens.

I was an active participant on the Foundations Harmonization, Information Interchange and Medication Terminologies subcommittees and the Consumers Preferences Tiger Team (CP-TT). A "tiger team" is a term that is used to designate a group that focuses on a specific problem and operates outside a normal chain of command. The HITSP contract was extended through January 2010 with teams held in place until April 30, 2010. Copies of thank you messages from the Co-Chairs of the CP-TT tiger team and from Dr. Blumenthal can be found on [2010 tab](#).

I currently am participating on the Personal Health Records (PHR) HL7 workgroup. This workgroup is a subcommittee of the Electronic Health Records (EHR) committee. I thoroughly enjoy participating as a member on HITSP and

HL7 workgroups and as an active observer of the two federal advisory committees (FACAs) and their subcommittees. In particular at this time I am an active observer of the privacy and security [tiger-team](#) composed of members from both the HITPC and HITSC as well as the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics ([NCVHS](#)).

When I was an elementary school student, in the 1940's, I remember reading an article in my *Weekly Reader* about a computer with thousands of electronic tubes that filled a room. I'm pretty sure that the article was about *Eniac*, the computer that launched the world into the computing age. Since that time, I have been a technology devotee.

Astoundingly, today, my laptop computer is vastly more powerful than even the main-frame computers of the 60's, 70's, and 80's and I can take it with me wherever I go. Even more amazing, while *Eniac* was a stand-alone computer, my laptop can connect to the Internet and be a part of a network of computers running programs either singly or in combination with one another with (what seems to be) nearly limitless storage.

My background is that of a counselor and social worker. For over 45 years, at both the county and state levels, I have worked to incorporate advances in information technology, as an avid computer enthusiast, for more efficient and effective delivery of health and social services. Over a span of many years, I have participated in many workgroups and have co-authored or contributed to numerous reports, proposals, discussion papers, algorithms and other documents that provide an applied historical context for my contributions to the current healthcare IT discussion.

I hope to share many of these artifacts over the coming years and have structured my Website so as to identify hyperlinks having such content (or references to other relevant documents or laws) with an asterisk (*). For the years 2008, 2009 and (continuing in) 2010 I am posting a number of documents that are the basis for my ongoing case study of computerized electronic health records components including the [nutritional health assessment form](#), implemented by Dane County (Wisconsin), [as mandated](#) by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS). I believe Wisconsin's implementation of the Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) as hosted in [AgingNetwork.com](#) violates my and other seniors' rights to the privacy and security of our personal health information (PHI). As a senior citizen, I am looking at health information technology (HIT) from a consumer's standpoint. For me personally, it's looking at HIT through the "donut hole" (which will be closed by 2020).

Fred Buhr, MSSW