

Senate Bill 660

California Health and Human Services Data Exchange Framework. Senator Caroline Menjivar (D – San Fernando Valley)

SUMMARY

SB 660 establishes the California Health and Human Services (CalHHS) Data Exchange Board to review and approve changes to California's health care and social services Data Exchange Framework and data sharing agreement which will be regulated by California's Center for Data Insights and Innovation (CDII).

PROBLEM

California has a fragmented system of health information sharing. There are varying degrees of data exchange in the state that are limited to certain networks, regions and the types of data that are shared. For example clinical data shared within an integrated system may not be accessible to care providers outside of the system. Additionally, even with the previous work in establishing the Data Exchange Framework, we still don't have all health care entities participating in data sharing. There are also data silos where information is not shared between public health, social services, and medical providers. For individuals, this can mean a lack of life-saving information available to medical personnel during an emergency, or valuable time wasted rerunning unnecessary diagnostic tests. Care coordination can also be challenging when critical data and information is not shared among care providers.

Given the growth in recent natural and human-caused disasters, displaced Californians and their providers may need to temporarily or permanently relocate. Access to health and social services data wherever they are in the state can ensure safe and appropriate care. Data sharing can ensure a natural disaster victim's medication history can be accessed and refilled when the victim is transported out of the area for treatment. Recent and emerging outbreaks and pandemics demonstrate the need for sharing real-time information across systems about testing, treatment, vaccinations, and resource management. Lastly, unhoused Californians with serious medical and behavioral health conditions who access multiple health and social services organizations can be better served when care coordination information is accessible during client/patient encounters.

BACKGROUND

In 2021, budget trailer bill (AB 133, Chapter 143, Statutes of 2021) was adopted to, among other things, establish a process for developing the California Data Exchange Framework, which included a stakeholder advisory committee with milestone targets, and required timeframes for health care organizations to adopt the framework and provide real-time health information exchange. The framework is an agreement across health and human services systems and providers that facilitate sharing information safely. It was finalized in 2022 and execution of the Data Sharing Agreement began in 2023, with the expectation that all providers start exchanging data by 2026. In 2023, budget trailer bill provisions were proposed to require CDII to take over control of the Data Exchange Framework, however those provisions were not adopted. In 2023, AB 1331 (Wood) contained similar provisions including the addition of enforcement mechanisms but AB 1331 was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SOLUTION

A statewide Data Exchange Framework was created to securely standardize and clarify data sharing policies and procedures, and a standard data sharing agreement ensures participants agree to follow the policies and procedures. With the passage of SB 660, a structure for governance of the Data Exchange Framework and its policies and procedures will be enacted that will ensure participation, accountability, and confidence for data exchange stakeholders and ultimately, better care for Californians. Access to comprehensive, real-time information is essential for making care more affordable while improving quality, safety, and outcomes.

STATUS

Introduced – February 20, 2025

SUPPORT

Connecting for Better Health (Sponsor)

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