

CAIHS Technology Update

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE
OCTOBER 2023



HIT Modernization: Replacing RPMS



Features we seek in the new EHR

- Consolidation of information from prior system
- Optimization of continuity of care and clinical decision support
- Increased patient access to providers and health care information
- Minimization of wait times and paperwork
- Promotion of high level of care through best-practice workflows
- Provide opportunities to improve population health outcomes



Timeline

2018 - 2019

Research

- Health and Human Services (HHS)/IHS Modernization Research Project Report with three modernization approaches
- U.S. Government and Accountability Office (GAO) Report on Critical Legacy Systems
- HHS Office of the Inspector General health IT reports released

2020 - 2021

Plan

- Listening Sessions on modernization approaches
- [Decision memo](#) announcing plans to replace Resource and Patient Management System (RPMS)
- Establish Program Management Office (PMO)
- Virtual Industry Day and Requests for Information (RFI) from industry
- Acquisition strategy

2022 - 2024

Buy & Build

- Office of Information Technology (OIT) Division of Health IT Modernization and Operations (DHITMO) creation
- Request for Proposal (RFP) for EHR solution vendor & integrator
- Extensive proposal evaluation and product demonstrations
- Contracts for PMO and Organizational Change Management (OCM) support
- **EHR solution award pending**
- Start of system build
- Human Capital Planning/Workforce Analysis

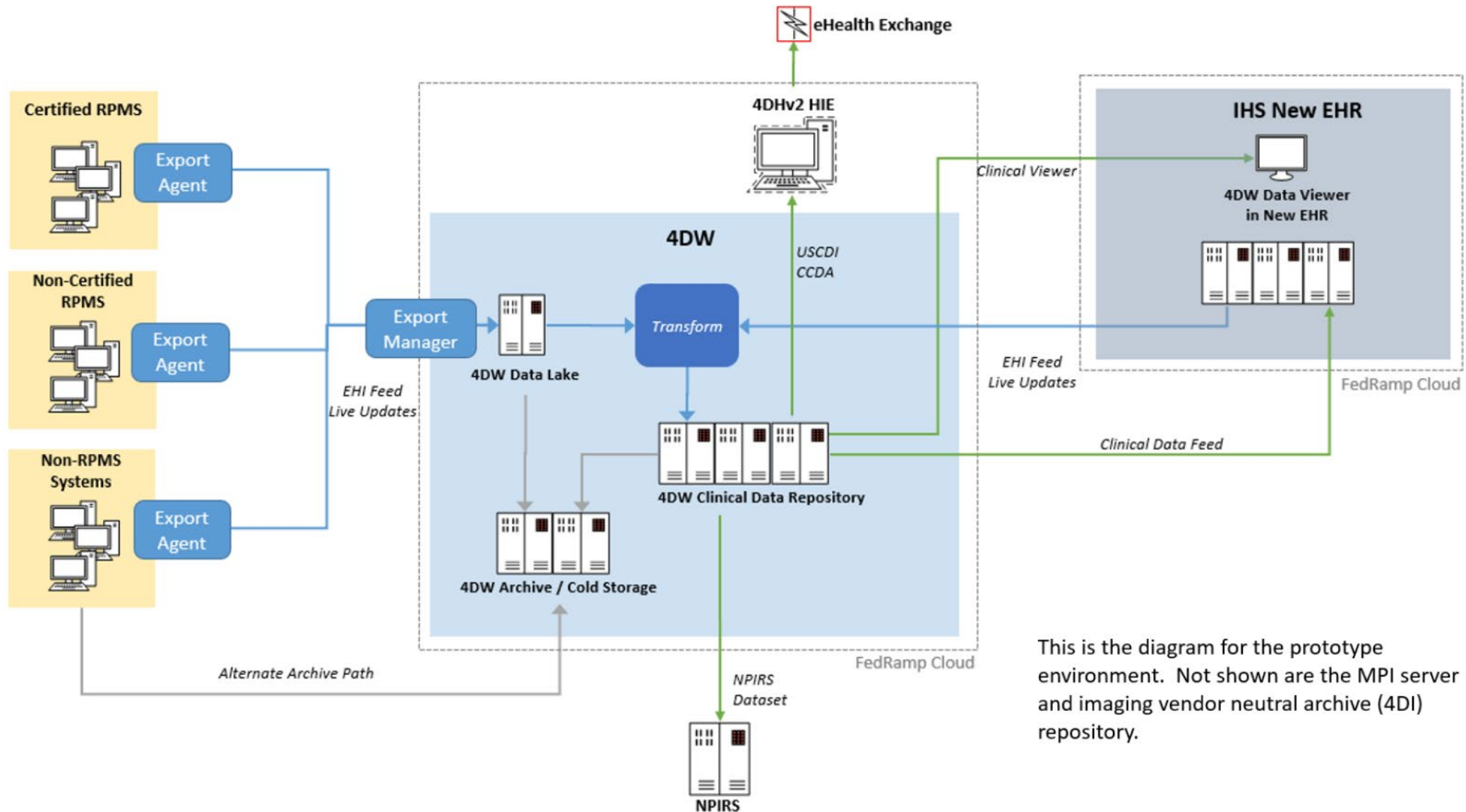
2025 +

Train, Deploy, Operate

- Focus on Organizational Change Management
- Local infrastructure assessment and mitigation
- User training
- Multi-year rollout in cohorts, across IHS, Tribal, and Urban Indian Organizations (I/T/U)



4DW Architectural Design



This is the diagram for the prototype environment. Not shown are the MPI server and imaging vendor neutral archive (4DI) repository.

Activities to Support The Program

1

Statement of Interest

IHS invites Tribal and Urban Indian Organizations to indicate their potential interest in participating as a tenant on the new EHR, through a NON-BINDING [Statement of Interest](#)

2

Focus Groups

After the EHR vendor selection, IHS will have informal focus groups comprised of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) from health care programs across Indian Country

Initial focus groups are planned around **interoperability, data management and analytics,** and **implementation,** although more may be created as the need arises

3

Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer

[REGISTER](#)

November 8, 2023
The Path Forward

An overview of the August 2, 2023 TC/U can be found on the [IHS blog](#)

4

Stay Up To Date

Read each month's [Dear Tribal Leader Letters](#) and [Dear Urban Indian Organization Leader Letters](#)

Next steps... prepare

People

- Prioritize your people. Assess your staffing, identify those critical vacancies, and fill them. These are **not just IT vacancies**, but any positions, especially in leadership, across all disciplines. Transitioning to a new health IT solution will impact every department, every user, and every leader and administrator, even if they don't directly use the system.
- Identify “**change champions**”. These are people in virtually any role across your organization who you know are early adopters and natural leaders, and who can provide the enthusiasm and positive energy to help your site – and possibly others – to be successful with modernization.

Process

- Get caught up on any coding, billing, and accounts receivable backlogs.
- Engage with the **Workflow Research and Alignment Plan (WRAP)** initiative. **WRAP** is designed to facilitate interaction and discussion across the country on processes that are high risk, high frequency, and/or substantially variable. The intent is to arrive at consensus on best practices in important workflows.

Technology

- Be certain your technical teams are following life cycle management best practices for all technologies – computers, servers, biomedical equipment, etc. It will be important not to have a lot of equipment approaching end of life when trying to upgrade our health IT solutions.
- Routinely monitor RPMS and other error traps and follow up with IT support to resolve outstanding issues. Having all of our systems working as cleanly as possible will facilitate transition with fewer errors.
- Ensure that system administration processes and backups are regularly performed. Don't wait until the last minute to back up RPMS and other systems; that is an invitation for disaster.



IT Support

- The IHS IT support system is tiered: **Tier 3** is HQ support, **Tier 2** is area support, and **Tier 1** is the local site manager and clinical applications coordinator. It is important that programs have Tier 1 staff in place
- Many California programs are already participating in EHR Buy-Back program that is administered by the California Area Office. This program has been used as a vehicle to provide contracted technical services for pharmacy and lab support. We are looking into the possibility of using this to get CAC support for participating programs
- If your program is currently contracting for information technology services, we recommend that you approach this contractor about the possibility of adding an RPMS EHR specialist to their roster.



Connectivity

- Low Orbiting Satellite technology (LOST) is an emerging option for connectivity, particularly for rural areas.
- Minimum of 20mbps required to support cloud EHR
- We are aware of at least one program that is using LOST. If your program is using LOST, can you share your experience with us?
- California is standing up a state-wide broadband network that connects rural and underserved communities to the global Internet. These “middle-mile” projects are underway.
- Make sure to attend the Annual Tribal Consultation in the Spring of 2024 – we will be updating last year’s broadband presentation.



CyberSecurity

- The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced the [opening of the application process](#) for the [Tribal Cybersecurity Grant Program](#) (TCGP) to help tribal governments address cybersecurity risks and threats.
- The cyber grant program, established by the State and Local Cybersecurity Improvement Act as part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, helps address the unique challenges tribal governments face when defending against cyber threats.
- Digital threats impacting Native American and Alaska Native tribes are increasing and becoming more complex. Tribal sovereignty creates unique cybersecurity challenges for these groups that often lack or can't easily access resources needed to address them.
- Applicants have until January 10, 2024, to apply for a grant, which can be used to fund new or existing cybersecurity programs. CISA encourages all eligible entities to apply for grant funds to protect our critical infrastructure and communities from malicious cyber activity.
- For more information and helpful resources on the Tribal Cybersecurity Grant Program, visit CISA's <http://www.cisa.gov/Cyber-Grants> or FEMA's webpage at [Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program](#).



CAO IT Modernization: Future proofing

The CAO value proposition is based around knowledge, not hardware. We are future proofing by being agile and assuring a light footprint.

- Virtualization
 - We are in the planning process of the CAIHS OIT Operations Refresh
 - In situations where appropriate, servers will be virtualized in the Albuquerque Data Center (ADC)
 - Future state: all operations and data storage will take place in the cloud
- Datacenter relocation to Sacred Oaks. Benefits include:
 - Proximity of Systems Administrator
 - Greater capability for failover in the event of disaster
 - Desert Sage will mirror as a recovery site
- LOST
 - Low Orbiting Satellite Technology
 - Will allow redundancy for mediation of dubious network infrastructure in Hemet
 - Potential solution to broadband in the event of emergencies (such as wildfires) in tribal areas



Questions?





**To learn more about the HIT Modernization and the future of CAO technology
operations contact**

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