Dear Colleagues:

How much our world has changed in a few short months. The coronavirus pandemic has challenged our public health system and our economy in ways that bring new urgency to innovate. At MITRE, we are addressing the full gamut of responses as we continue to focus on our mission to create a safer world during this critical time. We developed Sara Alert™ to help public health officials monitor the pandemic and the tool has since been implemented in several U.S. jurisdictions. We are helping lead the COVID-19 Healthcare Coalition to share resources and save lives. We have created guidelines to protect the $3 trillion coronavirus relief aid from fraud and error. And our open-source tool Synthea™ is providing researchers and developers with synthetic patient data to advance work in finding treatments for diseases, such as COVID-19. Please read more on these initiatives inside. I welcome your feedback!

Yours sincerely,
Patty Steinbrech
Vice President and Director
CMS Alliance to Modernize Healthcare (Health FFRDC)

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE:

- COVID-19 Healthcare Coalition Shares Expertise and Saves Lives
- Sara Alert™ Enables Accelerated Public Health Response to COVID-19
- Five Steps for Protecting Coronavirus Relief Funding from Fraud
- Synthea™ Simulates Patient Data to Accelerate Health Outcomes
COVID-19 Healthcare Coalition Shares Expertise and Saves Lives

Responding to a request from the private sector, MITRE is helping organize and lead the COVID-19 Healthcare Coalition, representing nearly 750 healthcare organizations, technology firms, nonprofits, and universities including Amazon Web Services, Google, and the Mayo Clinic. By coordinating the collective expertise, capabilities, data, and insights of its members, the coalition enables real-time learning to save lives. Among the many resources now available are a nationwide tracking map that identifies the next potential hot spots, data definitions that accelerate studies of potential new treatments, and real-time testing results at the county level. These efforts provide critical support to government leaders, front-line healthcare personnel, and private-sector decision makers.

Sara Alert™ Enables Accelerated Public Health Response to COVID-19

Following its launch in April, Sara Alert™, MITRE’s public health disease monitoring and reporting system, has been implemented at the state, local, and territory level to enable public health workers to monitor and respond to the coronavirus pandemic. This powerful tool introduces automated symptom monitoring, isolation, and quarantine and helps ease the massive burden on public health resources. While Sara Alert is built for the COVID-19 response, it is easily modified for any future outbreak, and the open-source tool is freely available for use by federal, state, territorial, tribal, and local governments and regional health organizations.

The team behind Sara Alert has raced to build a program that could be a ‘force multiplier’ for public-health agencies.

– Bloomberg News, April 22, 2020
Five Steps for Protecting Coronavirus Relief Funding from Fraud

If conventional wisdom holds, about seven percent of the $3 trillion coronavirus relief aid will be consumed by fraud or error.¹ That’s a potential loss of $210 billion in taxpayer funding. To help federal agencies create program integrity functions that prevent improper payments, MITRE recommended five mitigation actions related to enhancing stakeholder collaboration and improving data sharing and analysis. Such efforts could also serve as long-term protections for all types of government payments.

Since 2003, agencies estimate they have made about $1.7 trillion in improper payments.

– From the MITRE white paper

¹ This estimate was often cited by Earl Devaney, former chairman of the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board, which oversaw the spending of stimulus money in 2009.

Synthea™ Simulates Patient Data to Accelerate Health Outcomes

Synthea™, an open source data generation and disease modeling tool, is filling a critical gap to find new treatments and cures for COVID-19 and other diseases. Privacy regulations and security concerns make it hard for software developers to obtain access to real patient data. Medical communities, including developers and researchers, are using Synthea to generate data to do discovery, analysis, and development, while meeting patient record privacy and security requirements. Synthea data is being used in COVID-19 virtual challenge hackathons and is freely available for reuse by government and private-sector teams.

Synthea has been the missing piece for health IT since health IT began.

– Sunnie Southern, Vice President of Health and Life Sciences, Onix

Read the MITRE white paper at: https://tinyurl.com/yddzem97

Learn about how Synthea accelerates innovations at: www.mitre.org/project-stories/synthea
About the CMS Alliance to Modernize Healthcare (Health FFRDC)

The CMS Alliance to Modernize Healthcare (Health FFRDC) accelerates innovation by connecting people and data to reinvent health systems, enhance the care experience, and protect and promote the health and well-being of all Americans. Sponsored by CMS in conjunction with all Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) staff and operating divisions, the Health FFRDC serves as an objective adviser to all HHS organizations and other federal agencies with health and human services missions. As operator of the Health FFRDC, MITRE combines cross-cutting capabilities in health policy, clinical informatics, interoperability, and data analytics with world-class information technology, systems engineering, and prototyping to improve the health and well-being of the nation.

About MITRE

MITRE’s mission-driven teams are dedicated to solving problems for a safer world. Through public-private partnerships and federally funded research and development centers, we work across government and in partnership with industry to tackle challenges to the safety, stability, and well-being of our nation. Join us at www.mitre.org.

About MITRE Health Innovations newsletter