

APPENDIX E

Implementing the Texas Transformation

Managed Service Delivery

Has the Agency considered use of managed services in order to focus more on its business needs?

The Agency is involved in several managed service initiatives. As an early adopter of TexasOnline, we continue to utilize the official Portal of Texas to leverage our limited resources providing valuable information, licensing and renewal services to our customers.

During the last legislative session the Health Professions Council (HPC) received funding for a document imaging system to be shared among the health related agencies. The Board of Pharmacy is an active participant and a strong supporter of this HPC managed system.

Along with several other health related agencies, our primary database system resides at the Austin Disaster Recovery Center (ADROC). The systems hardware is managed through the IBM consolidated data center contract while applications support is managed through Department of Information Resources (DIR)'s contract with Abdeladim & Associates. Many of these database systems are critically outdated and in need of replacement. In conjunction with the impending repurposing of the ADROC, the health related agencies are working collectively with DIR to determine the appropriate migration path for this managed service. The Board of Pharmacy actively supports this collective effort.

Managed IT Supply Chain

Does the Agency leverage and obtain additional value from the Information and Communications Technology (ITC) Cooperative Contracts program; for example, by further negotiating not-to-exceed pricing?

The agency does leverage cooperative contracts to secure the best prices for hardware, software and services. Depending on the quantity of an item or items to be purchased, the agency will contact the vendor directly and attempt to negotiate additional price cuts. Historically, vendors have been receptive to requests for reduced pricing, providing prompt responses and incentives for upgraded configurations. This is especially true when the HPC member agencies act collectively in their purchase requests.

Security and Privacy

Describe the agency's strategies to align with the State Enterprise Security Plan.

The appropriate agency personnel have reviewed the State Enterprise Security Plan and are working to fully implement actions identified as "Agency Responsibilities" in the Tactical Checklist.

Key Actions already in place:

- Maintain current inventories and network maps of hardware, software applications and operating systems
- Report significant cyber security incidents to DIR through the security incident reporting system (SIRS)
- Assign agency users appropriate system responsibilities and permissions
- Identify privacy data
- Conduct regular external network vulnerability and penetration tests
- Develop an information technology disaster recovery plan
- Utilize best-value group purchase agreements and take full advantage of DIR negotiated rates
- Review of all major information resources projects by agency employees in charge of information security reviews
- Maintain multiple layers of physical security
- Train information security officer regularly on security issues
- Apply security patches and anti-virus/anti-spam updates
- Follow acceptable use and security policies
- Comply with state technology mandates and recommendations

Describe the agency's policies, practices and programs, implemented or planned, that comply with the relevant statutes and administrative rules to ensure the privacy of confidential data. Consider federal privacy requirements that apply to the agency. List the organizational units (program, offices, IT, legal, etc.) that manage privacy functions. Describe any future plans for improvement.

The agency complies with the privacy and confidentiality provisions of state and federal law, in particular the relevant provisions of the Government Code, the Public Information Act, the Texas Pharmacy Act and any relevant HIPAA provisions. The agency's public information division handles all requests for information, and, along with the agency's legal division, determines the responsive public document for release. By routing all requests for information through one centralized division, the agency can ensure that information is properly released and that all legal provisions are followed.

If information is requested that is deemed to be confidential, the public information division will clarify with the requestor, and, if necessary, the legal division will ask for an opinion from the Office of Attorney General regarding whether the information is confidential and should not be released. Should information that is contained in an electronic format be involved, the IT manager will coordinate with the computer system vendor to obtain the information in electronic format, but ultimately, the information is released by the public information division. When confidential human resources information is involved, the release of the information or the request for an opinion by the OAG is again coordinated by the public information division with input from the legal division.

Each agency employee undergoes an intensive orientation program upon employment and receives training from both his/her division and the general counsel regarding which information is confidential and which information would be subject to public disclosure. In addition, the importance on routing all requests to the public information division is impressed on each employee.

Internally, information on the data processing system is limited by the type of function that each employee performs. For example, an employee in the enforcement division does not have the ability to update billing records. In the future, the agency intends to further restrict visibility and access to information of a potential confidential nature depending on the need of each employee to access such information.

Technology Policy, Best Practices, and Partnerships

What current practices or plans are in place to improve usability and searchability of the agency's web content?

Currently, data from the agency's database is refreshed on the agency web site on a daily basis. The agency is actively working with the Department of Information Resources and the Health Professions Council to migrate to a more modern database system that will enable real-time data access.

The web site employs a site map and search function to assist agency constituents seeking information. Web content is actively reviewed by the appropriate department for accuracy, usability and Section 508 compliance. Recently, staff responsible for pharmacy licensure restructured that section of the site to improve accuracy and ease of use. A "frequently asked questions" section was also added. The changes were well received.

What current practices or plans are in place to improve life cycle management of agency data and information? Include the agency's approach and ability to meet future open records and e-discovery requests.

All documents and data are kept in compliance with the agencies record retention schedule. Recent efforts have been aimed at aligning the retention of electronic documents with that of the paper documents.

Describe agency methods and standards (federal, state, industry), implemented or planned, intended to enhance data sharing (i.e., improve interoperability) with other entities.

The agency provides data to the Texas Guaranteed Student Load Corporation, Texas Attorney General Office - Child Support Division, State and Local Representatives and the General Public, all at no or cost recovery prices. The agency will also participate with the Department of State Health Services in its Texas Volunteer Health Professions project, supplying monthly updates of information on pharmacists. In compliance with SB 29 of the 80th Regular Legislative Session, the agency is working with the Department of Information Resources (Texas Online) to modify its online applications and its database to assist with the collection of the State Minimum Data Set.

Core Missions

Does the agency have any plans to simplify or reduce the number of existing software platforms (e.g., operating systems, application development environments, database systems, office suites, other COTS applications)? If no, is the agency fully leveraging its technology to support both its current and future business environment?

Over the past eight years the agency has streamlined internal network operations to a single server operating system and a single desktop operating system. The use of multiple office suites has also been reduced to a single COTS solution. On a broader scale, the agency is working with the other 11 health related agencies to deploy a licensing system that will retain the uniqueness of each agency while leveraging our collective resources.

Describe any current or planned activities targeted at reducing the environmental resource consumption of technology equipment (recycling, consolidating, virtualizing, buying energy efficient equipment, etc.).

Energy consumption is reduced by utilizing the “power schemes” on the desktop and laptop systems. These same systems are also shutdown at night. The use of GREEN processors will be deployed in the future when possible.