

**TO:** Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Grantees

**FROM:** {insert name}, Center Director, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, SAMHSA {insert name}, Director, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Analysis, Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology

**SUBJECT:** Behavioral Health Information Technologies Survey

**DATE:** XX, XX, XXXX

Dear Colleagues,

We are inviting you to participate in a 15-25 minute Health Information Technology (HIT) related survey being conducted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC). As you may know, SAMHSA has established Health Information Technology (HIT) as one of its Strategic Initiatives aimed at advancing the use of HIT to support integrated behavioral health care and its potential to transform the health care system. To support this initiative, SAMHSA and ONC have developed a survey instrument that will collect data on behavioral health information technology adoption and use, as well as interoperability among SAMHSA grantees. These data are vital to SAMHSA planning and implementation of HIT activities and future programmatic planning. These data are also critical to ONC, who will be using them to track progress related to interoperability across a variety of settings, including behavioral health.

If your program agrees to participate in the survey, the survey respondent can be the Project Director or another designated staff member who may be more familiar the health information technology within your organization. SAMHSA defers to the Project Director to make the determination of who should answer the survey. However, communication for the data collection will be through the Project Director. Forthcoming information about the survey will be coming from the National Council for Behavioral Health (National Council) in the next few days.

SAMHSA believes that this is an important project that will contribute to SAMHSA's Strategic Initiatives: "Health Information Technology" and "Health Care and Health Systems Integration," and we very much value your participation in the survey as it will help to inform the direction of SAMHSA's HIT initiatives.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Dantrell Simmons or Vaishali Patel. Their contact information can be found below.

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{Insert signature}

Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, SAMHSA

{Insert signature}

Office of Planning, Evaluation & Analysis, ONC

Dear SAMHSA Grantee,

You should have recently received a message from SAMSHA and ONC informing you of the release of the 2017 Behavioral Health Information Technologies and Standards (BHITS) survey. The survey will only take between 15 to 25 minutes to complete and should be filled out by the team member on the grant program that is most familiar with the health IT infrastructure of your organization. Please help us ensure that this message reaches the most appropriate individual by forwarding this message to them. The more responses we receive, the more robust the data will be to draw accurate conclusions to inform strategic and operational planning at the national level.

[Click here to start the survey](#)

The information collected will be instrumental in giving SAMHSA and the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) a better understanding of how behavioral health organizations use health information technologies to enhance care coordination and improve the patient experience, with a focus on the areas of interoperability and Health Information Exchanges. The data obtained will also provide much needed information about barriers and challenges in the adoption of these technologies.

For specific survey questions, please contact the [BHITS Help Desk](#) at [BHITShelp@thenationalcouncil.org](mailto:BHITShelp@thenationalcouncil.org) or 1-800-###-####.

We very much value your participation in the survey and appreciate your help in this effort!

Thank you,