

Industry Groups Weigh in on Digital Health Data

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Earlier this month, Senators Ron Wyden of Oregon and Chuck Grassley of Iowa introduced the bipartisan Medicare Data Access for Transparency and Accountability Act ([Medicare DATA Act](#)), which would make Medicare claims data available to the public. The two Senate Finance Committee leaders are also soliciting

suggestions for improvements to transparency rules from consumer, health care, physician and insurance organizations.

In a letter sent to more than 100 industry stakeholders, Senators Wyden and Grassley requested suggestions on what forms of health data could be most useful, what data should be more broadly available and what barriers exist to using data effectively.

Encouraging health data transparency has gained much attention in recent weeks. In early June, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced plans to release data products and tools to increase transparency and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) launched [openFDA](#), the agency's latest initiative designed to facilitate easier access to important public health information. As more federal agencies join the mission to make data public, we will be watching for innovations that will allow individuals to make the most of the information available.

The greater access that industry experts have in facilitating research needs is likely to make for more efficient models of health care management. In their letter to stakeholders, Senators Wyden and Grassley also note that digital health data “has great potential for use by consumers who can be empowered to choose providers who best fit their specific needs; by providers who can improve and deliver higher-quality care; and by payers who can design the most efficient and effective delivery models.”

By providing industry stakeholders with information that they can use to interpret and discover trends, we are empowering both providers and patients to develop new systems for combing through and utilizing relevant data points. As stakeholders begin to offer their suggestions on digital health data and transparency, we look forward to seeing what innovations might be on the horizon.

What forms of health data would you like to have streamlined access to? Tweet @CNSICorp to let us know! Follow CNSI on [Twitter](#).