

Questions for the Record from Chairman Davis to ACF Acting  
Assistant Secretary George Sheldon

**Hearing on the Use of Technology to Better Target Benefits  
and Eliminate Waste, Fraud, and Abuse**

April 19, 2012

Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources

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**Questions for the Record**  
**April 19, 2012 Hearing**  
**HHS Witness: ACF Acting Assistant Secretary George Sheldon**

**Question 1:** Your written testimony mentions the Office of Management and Budget's working group on data exchange standards, which is the same one specified by the statutory language. Can you tell us more about how this group will function? What other agencies and stakeholders will be included? Has the group met? If not, when can we expect it to meet?

**Answer:** Based on preliminary conversations we have had with OMB, we know they are working to develop the parameters and membership of the working group. Once those decisions are made, they plan to hold meetings of the interagency working group and anticipate the first meeting will be held this summer. As provided in the statute, this effort also will include a consultative process with Tribes and State and local organizations.

**Question 2:** It seems there are multiple ways in which NIEM is beginning or already attempting to implement NIEM. Which such heavy focus on it, what financial and human resources is HHS devoting to this new effort? How is NIEM included in the annual budget request process? Will this current approach be sufficient as NIEM increase in scope and scale?

**Answer:** The Department of Health and Human Services has established the health and human services domains within NIEM. Funding for these activities include contributions from the Office of National Coordinator under its standards and interoperability initiatives as well as in-kind support from the Administration for Children and Families and the Office of the Chief Information Officer. As the scope and scale of NIEM activities increases, we anticipate additional resources from participating agencies will be required to support the NIEM PMO.

**Question 3:** Both the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security have previously or are currently hosting the NIEM project management office (PMO). It is our understanding that the PMO is designed to rotate, ideally to a new agency so they could provide fresh ideas and take an increased role in shaping the future of NIEM. HHS is currently the only other voting agency member on the NIEM steering committee that has not hosted the NIEM PMO. With DHS reaching the same four-year mark that DOJ did when it handed off the NIEM PMO, has HHS considered being the next to provide a home to NIEM? Why or why not?

**Answer:** To date, the Department has concentrated its work with NIEM on providing value in the new health and human resources domains, and building communities of interest. The Department has not made plans or proposals to host the NIEM PMO. We look forward to continuing to work our partners on NIEM, and if adequate resources are available would consider serving as the host agency in the future.