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September 21, 2022

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RE: Request for Kaiser affiliate access (Northern)

To whom it may concern,

California Health and Safety Code 120175 states that "Each health officer knowing or having reason to believe that any case of the diseases made reportable by regulation of the department, or any other contagious, infectious or communicable disease exists, or has recently existed, within the territory under his or her jurisdiction, shall take measures as may be necessary to prevent the spread of the disease or occurrence of additional cases." California Code of Regulations Title 17 section 2502 (g) states: "Whenever the health officer collects personal information in order to prepare an individual case report required by subsection (b), the health officer shall notify the individual from whom the information is collected that: (1) supplying personal information related to the individual's disease is mandatory; (2) the only disclosure of personal information will be pursuant to subsections 2502(f)(1) and 2502(f)(2); and (3) non-personal information may be disclosed pursuant to subsection 2502(f)(3)." In order for health officers to control the spread of communicable diseases, this information must be obtained in a timely manner.

To meet these requirements, many hospital systems have granted access to public health staff to review patient records to obtain this information in the time needed to take public health action to stop the spread of communicable disease. Kaiser has not granted access and does not supply the needed information in a time necessary to take public health action to control the spread of communicable diseases.

The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) supports accessibility to Kaiser Northern California's electronic health records for the purpose of expediting investigations of reported diseases, outbreaks, and other events of public health importance within the State of California. This collaboration would improve overall patient safety, patient satisfaction, and staff utilization for both the local public health departments and Kaiser Northern California.

CCLHO supports working with the California Department of Public Health and Kaiser on a mutually beneficial set of data standardization/automation. Your prompt consideration of this request is much appreciated. I am happy to meet and discuss further.

CCLHO was established in statute in 1947 to advise the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), other departments, boards, commissions, and officials of federal, state and local agencies, the Legislature, and other organizations on all matters affecting health. CCLHO membership consists of all legally appointed physician health officers in California's 61 city and county jurisdictions.

Sincerely,

Julie Vaishampayan, MD, MPH
President, California Conference of Local Health Officers