



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 9, 2022

For additional information, contact:

Emily Mata | 517.745.8835

emily.mata@mihin.org

Krystal Schramm Named DirectTrust Interoperability Hero

The initiative recognizes organizations, teams, and individuals integral to advancing interoperability

Lansing, Mich.— The Michigan Health Information Network (MiHIN) today announced that Krystal Schramm, Senior Technical Business Analyst, has been selected by DirectTrust as an Interoperability Hero for her work with Native American tribes in Michigan. The Interoperability Hero Initiative, now in its second year, recognizes organizations, teams, or individuals integral to advancing the timely and secure access, integration and use of electronic health data.

“I am honored to have been chosen as an Interoperability Hero,” said Schramm. “I’m incredibly proud of the strides we’ve made towards improving healthcare interoperability and health equity for our Michigan tribes and I’m looking forward to what we will accomplish together in the future.”

Schramm’s leadership has been foundational to MiHIN’s outreach and engagement with the 12 federally recognized tribes in Michigan. As a member of the Native community herself, Schramm was acutely aware that tribal populations have historically been underrepresented in public health data — and the resulting lack of support available when making decisions regarding tribal healthcare, both at the individual patient level and at clinic and system-wide levels.

Data show that Native American communities face inequity in health care and health status compared to other U.S. populations. To account for the health disparity data gap, Schramm began working with the tribes in Michigan to establish culturally relevant, interoperable, health information exchange opportunities. To date, eight tribes and the Urban Indian Health Center have signed the necessary legal and technical agreements to join the statewide network of health information exchanging entities.

By enabling the flow of data through the MiHIN network, health information can be shared quickly and seamlessly between systems. Making valuable data available at the point of care increases efficiency, improves patient care and safety and, ultimately, improves health equity amongst Native populations.

“As a Native who utilizes tribal healthcare, improving interoperability within the tribal communities in Michigan is near and dear to my heart,” said Schramm. “The current system operates on ‘piecemeal’ and inconsistent data, leading to poor quality care, delays and no usable personal health record. I can’t overstate the importance of this work. Not only will increasing tribal representation in healthcare data improve access to high quality healthcare services and improved coordination of care, it will ultimately lead to improved health outcomes for tribal patients. More inclusive data equals better health equity.”

In addition to her work with MiHIN, Schramm was appointed to the Michigan Chapter of the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Board of Directors as a Working Member of the



Advocacy Group. In this role, she aims to help establish a Native-centric sub-chapter that incorporates the Great Lakes Tribal Council, based in Wisconsin, and eventually include tribes in the upper Midwest to further advance tribal representation in Michigan's healthcare ecosystem.

"Krystal is a relentless advocate for the Native American community and has been instrumental in fostering relationships, building trust and effectively communicating why interoperability is a necessary next step for tribal health systems," said Dr Tim Pletcher, DHA, Executive Director of MiHIN. "This is an incredibly well-deserved recognition. We are proud of Krystal's tenacity and determination and lucky to have her as part of our organization."

Schramm's work directly supports MiHIN's commitment to health equity, diversity and inclusion and its overarching mission to improve coordination of care and health outcomes for all Michigan residents.

More on the Interoperability Hero Initiative can be found at <https://bit.ly/InteropHero>, and video spotlights on Interoperability Heroes are available at <https://bit.ly/InteropHeroVideos>.

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About Michigan Health Information Network Shared Services

The Michigan Health Information Network Shared Services (MiHIN) is Michigan's state designated entity for the technical, legal, secure, and private exchange of health information. Breaking down disparate and siloed data systems, the digital network is dedicated to transforming the healthcare experience, improving quality, decreasing cost and solving for health. MiHIN is a 501C3 non-profit, socio-technical collaboration that includes the State of Michigan, Health Information Exchanges, health systems, hospitals, care providers, behavioral health clinics, FQHC's, PIHPs, health plans/payers, pharmacies, post-acute care, hospices, and the Governor's Health Information Technology Commission. For more information, visit <https://mihin.org>

