Highlights from Health Datapalooza 2014

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Earlier this month, more than 2,000 entrepreneurs, investors, data scientists, researchers, policy experts and government employees gathered in Washington D.C. for [Health Datapalooza 2014](#). The national conference focused on expanding access to health data and brought together companies, startups and government agencies behind the newest and most innovative uses of health data to improve patient outcomes.

Shailesh Patel, CNSI's VP of Federal Health IT, Tatjana Misic, CNSI's Federal Health Business Analyst and Amit Garg, CNSI's Director of Analytics participated in the event attending breakout groups, training sessions and visiting the "Apps Expo" to explore innovative new tools and services. Many of these health services and tools align closely with [CNSI's value-driven model of putting innovation to work](#), which is why we were excited to hear the major announcements made regarding open data and transparency in our health care system — the clear focus of this year's event.

During the two-day conference, officials from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services presented key developments from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

CMS announced that it will be releasing a suite of data products and tools aimed to increase transparency in Medicare payments, including interactive dashboards for the CMS Chronic Conditions Data Warehouse and geographic variation data. Additionally, the agency revealed that it will make available several large data sets for consumers, researchers and entrepreneurs to use, allowing interested parties to analyze trends and compare data year-by-year, facilitating a better understanding of Medicare utilization.

In addition to CMS' open data news, U.S. Chief Technology Officer Todd Park announced similar FDA initiatives. Park announced the launch of [openFDA](), which is designed to facilitate easier access to large, important public health data sets collected by the agency.

The openFDA program aims to make data accessible in a structured, computer-readable format and provides technology specialists with an application programming interface that will encourage software developers to build their own applications, drawing information from the FDA in real-time. The opening of data sets is an important trend to watch as federal agencies and policy experts continue to expand and progress opportunities for innovation.

How can we continue to leverage transparency within data sets? Tweet @CNSICorp to let us know! Follow CNSI on [Twitter]().