



## HIE FAQ Clinical and Provider v1 06.11.18

Q: What is a Health Information Exchange (HIE)?

A: *A secure, electronic system that allows the efficient sharing of health information across a community or region.*

Q: Does all health information from every provider in a community or region go into the HIE?

A: *No. Only information from providers or organizations participating in the HIE goes in.*

Q: Do patients have to sign a special consent to have information go into the HIE?

A: *No. Existing consent forms that are already compliant with current law and rules are adequate. Minnesota is an “opt out” state which means existing consent laws cover data going **into** an HIE. The term “opt out” means patients have the right to **restrict access** to their data in the HIE. They do not need to specifically consent for their information to go into it.*

Q: Can a patient refuse to have information go into the HIE?

A: *No. Privacy law allows information from participating providers (providers that are part of the HIE) to go into the HIE.*

Q: Can someone refuse to allow access to their data in the HIE?

A: *Yes. An Opt Out form can be signed that will prevent anyone from accessing someone’s information in the HIE. **But this does take away the advantages of the HIE for both the patient and the provider giving care.***

Q: If a patient opts out of the HIE, does their data stop going into it?

A: *No. Because of the way the HIE functions and in accordance with privacy rules, data will still flow into the HIE. Opting out locks down a patient’s data that is in the HIE so it cannot be accessed.*

Q: If they opt out of the HIE can they change their mind later and have their information accessible?

A: *Yes. They can use the same form they signed to opt out of the HIE to opt back in.*

Q: Is information that goes into the HIE between the time of opting out and opting in available after they opt in?

A: *Yes. Because opting out only **restricts access** to the data and not the **flow of data into** the HIE, after an opt in, all data in the HIE is accessible.*

Q: Is this HIE compliant with the privacy laws of Minnesota?

A: *Yes. The HIE meets all of the current requirements under Minnesota and federal law.*

Q: Is a patient’s entire record viewable in the HIE?

A: *No. Only certain information important to their care is in the HIE. Their complete record is not viewable. The EHR is not accessed in the HIE.*

Q: What about sensitive information such as mental health, chemical dependency or certain lab results?

A: *Only persons with the right to see that level of information will be able to see it.*



Q: Is the health information still confidential? Is it secure? Who can see the information in the HIE?

A: *All information is very secure. Only providers that are given consent by the patient can access their information in the HIE.*

Q: What are the benefits of the HIE to doctors and other providers?

- *Clinical Portal*
  - *Patient longitudinal record*
  - *Ability to see labs and other important information from providers not part of the primary care clinic.*
- *Clinical Decision Support (CDS)*
  - *Immediate notification of significant patient events*
  - *Increased quality of care and enhanced health outcomes*
- *eHealth Exchange Connectivity*
  - *Connect to other HIE's/HIO's*
- *Public Health Reporting*
  - *Electronic Lab Reporting*
  - *Syndromic Surveillance*
- *Immunization Registry interface*

Q: What are the benefits of the HIE to the patient?

- *Improved patient care*
- *Improved care coordination*
- *Reduction of duplicate medical tests*
- *Cost savings*
- *Improved visit efficiency*
- *Rapid information sharing*
- *Automatic notifications to providers and care coordinators*

*A doctor and other providers will have more real-time information about your health. An example of this could be the emergency department doctor would know patient's current medications, allergies and conditions so they can provide safer, faster and more effective care.*

Q: With all of the electronic health records and computers, isn't patient information already available to everyone who needs to see it?

A: *No. Without the HIE, in most cases, each doctor or provider will only have the information about the care they give. In some cases, such as large health systems, the EHR may be a source of information for care given by that organization.*