

A SNAPSHOT OF THE

STATE HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE



Program Overview

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has awarded the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) \$13,003,003 in support of Georgia's on-going effort to transform health care by expanding the use of Electronic Health Records (EHR) and creating Health Information Exchange (HIE) at the local and state levels. The funding was made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The DCH Office of Health Information Technology and Transparency (OHITT) will use the award to convene Georgia's key health care stakeholders to develop strategic and operational plans that will guide the State HIE. Upon completion of the planning process of the project, the team will move into the implementation phase resulting in a governance structure, financial sustainability plan and an operational HIE. Funding will be used to build the HIE and to support the creation of interfaces with existing HIEs across Georgia.

Goals and Vision of the State HIE

The **vision** for the State HIE is to strengthen Georgia's health care system through secure and authorized exchange of patient health information among health care providers. The HIE will support patient-centered health care and continuous improvements in access, quality, outcomes and efficiency of care.

The **goal** of the State HIE is to facilitate access to and the retrieval of clinical data to provide safe, timely, efficient, effective and equitable patient-centered care. To support the State HIE vision, the following goals have been established:

- Create immediate access to critical health information for authorized patients and providers
- Help transform health care delivery to a patient-centered model where emphasis is placed on patient needs
- Support the meaningful use of electronic health records used throughout Georgia
- Protect personal health information (PHI) through privacy and security policies and best practices
- Strengthen existing and future state and federal health initiatives to improve clinical outcomes, improve patient safety, ensure security and reduce costs by:
 - ♦ linking the continuum of providers — public and private providers, physicians, clinics, labs and medical facilities supporting the health information exchange needs of Georgia's health improvement programs such as the Medical Assistance Program, Chronic Care Initiative, Public Health programs, Long-Term Living and other health care initiatives
 - ♦ strengthening the continuity and coordination of care
 - ♦ minimizing duplicate testing and services
- Engage and educate consumers and providers about the benefits of HIE and promote knowledge about privacy rights and protections
- Work to ensure that the costs for HIE do not add to the cost of health care and that the HIE assists in lowering the cost of health care in Georgia

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- Create an integrated governance structure for HIE that includes a role for key community stakeholders with statewide collaborative capabilities
- Develop an enterprise approach for Georgia that is aligned with the National Health Information Technology (HIT) vision, agenda and standards
- Facilitate health care providers' ability to qualify for Medicaid Incentive Payments

○ Proposed Outcomes of State HIE

The most important shared goals of HIE systems are improved patient safety and quality of care, enhanced revenue cycle performance, reduced costs and inefficiencies and improved communications across the care continuum. These goals are further defined as follows:

- 1. Making Health Care More Affordable:** HIEs can improve the efficiency of health care delivery by automating administrative practices that are currently performed manually. Doing so will make health care more affordable.
- 2. Fostering Better Decisions.** HIEs can improve the quality of care by bringing information to health care professionals at their decision-making moment. Better decisions will result in higher quality health care for the community.
- 3. Enhancing the Continuity of Care.** HIEs can link different health care providers so the continuity of care is improved as patients pass from the care of one group or provider to another. Better continuity of health care information will result in greater patient safety.
- 4. Catalyzing Economic Development.** HIEs can be areas of innovation that may lead to the creation of economic development opportunities for communities throughout Georgia.

○ Common HIT Definitions

Health Information Exchange (HIE) – HIE is the electronic movement of health-related information among disparate organizations according to nationally recognized standards in an authorized and secure manner.

Electronic Health Record (EHR) – an electronic record of health-related information for an individual that conforms to nationally recognized interoperability standards that can be created, managed and consulted by authorized clinicians and staff across *more than one health care organization*.

Electronic Medical Record (EMR) – an electronic record of health-related information regarding an individual that conforms to nationally recognized interoperability standards and that can be created, gathered, managed, and consulted by authorized clinicians and staff within *one health care organization*.

Personal Health Record (PHR) – an electronic record of health-related information regarding an individual that can be managed, *shared and controlled by the individual*.

Regional Health Information Organization (RHIO) – A health information organization that brings together health care stakeholders within a defined geographic area and governs health information exchange among them for the purpose of improving health and care in that community.

Protected Health Information (PHI) – Protected health information under HIPAA includes any *individually identifiable* health information. PHI is safeguarded through privacy and security policies and best practices.