

## Health Information Exchange (HIE)

1) What does **HIE** mean?

- **HIE** stands for *Health Information Exchange* and is a term used to describe the sharing of health information through a secure electronic network that allows participating health care systems and providers to electronically share health information about their patients with each other, with other providers who have a treatment relationship with the patient, and for other healthcare operations related activities.

2) How is the information in the HIE kept private and secure?

- The **HIE** uses advanced systems to assist in securing records and preventing access by unauthorized persons. All systems must comply with the Security Rule promulgated under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

3) Are all healthcare systems and providers participating in the HIE required to protect the confidentiality of the electronic health information stored in the HIE regardless of the information's source?

- HealthTexas and Baylor have taken reasonable safeguards, including entering into the appropriate agreements, with all of its members and participants and connected **HIE's** that will restrict the use of protected health information to only those uses permitted under HIPAA and other federal and state laws.

4) Does this mean that the information in the HIE can be looked at on the Internet by anyone?

- No, the medical information is kept private and secure and is viewable only by authorized healthcare providers.

5) What types of information is shared in the HIE?

- The **HIE** may share certain test results, medications, allergies, practitioner names, immunizations, radiology images, problem lists, consents, advanced directives, and other limited clinical information involved in patient care. Certain demographic information used to identify the individual, such as name, date of birth, address, and other types of identifiers might also be shared.

6) What are the benefits of participating in an HIE?

- Sharing health information helps providers to give better quality care to their patients.
- Sharing health information helps providers to better understand a patient's health history.
- Sharing health information helps providers to make better decisions about a patient's care before recommending treatment.
- Sharing health information helps to improve treatment and management of diseases.
- Sharing health information helps to prevent unnecessary or duplicated tests or medicines that may have adverse reactions with certain patients.



- Sharing health information helps to give providers more timely access to patient information.
- Sharing health information in the HIE allows providers to access patient information without requiring patients coordinating getting paper copies of their medical record sent to the provider.

7) Does HealthTexas require all patients to participate in the HIE?

- No. If a patient does not wish to participate in the **HIE**, they can choose to opt-out by following the opt-out instructions found on the Notice of Health Information Practices located on the last page under *Electronic Health Information Exchange*.
- The HIE Opt-Out Form can be requested from registration staff, and it is also available for patients on the Baylor Health Care System website.

8) If a HealthTexas patient chooses to opt-out of the HIE, will their ability to get health care at HealthTexas be affected?

- No. If a HealthTexas patient chooses to opt-out of the **HIE**, their ability to get health care at HealthTexas *will not* be affected. HealthTexas will not refuse to provide care to any patient that chooses to opt-out of the **HIE**.

9) If a patient chooses to opt-out of the HIE, can they request to opt-in if they change their mind at a later date?

- Yes. Patients can still request to participate in the **HIE**, even if they have previously opted-out.



- Patients must submit a revocation of opting out request form by following the same set of opt-out instructions found on the Notice of Health Information Practices. These instructions are located on the last page under *Electronic Health Information Exchange*.
- The Revocation of Opting Out for Access to Protected Health Information through Health Information Exchange Request Form can be requested from registration staff, and it is also available for patients on the Baylor Health Care System website.

10) If a patient chooses to participate, will there be historical health information about them available in the HIE, and if so, how far back does it go?

- Yes. The **HIE** will have historical patient medical information if they have been a patient within the past 3 months. If not, then the **HIE** will not contain any historical health information for the patient.