

Florida Health Information Network Privacy and Security

Florida Health Information Network Background

Legislation in 2004 authorized the Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency) to prepare a strategy for encouraging health care providers to adopt electronic health record systems. Since 2006, the Agency has funded the development of local health information networks with the goal of encouraging the adoption and sharing of health records among physicians and other health care practitioners.

Current Electronic Health Records Utilization

Currently, there are more than seven active Regional Health Information Organizations (RHIOs) in Florida. However, only one in five health care providers have electronic health records and few of them exchange information electronically.

The Value of an Electronic Health Information Network

Health information technology can enhance communications at every level of the health care delivery system. Health information network benefits include:

- Providing a detailed, accurate patient medical history at the point of care;
- Safeguarding health records in the event of a local or national disaster;
- Improving the coordination of care for people with chronic conditions or conditions that require complex treatment regimens;
- Helping people in emergencies, natural disasters, and when changing health care providers due to a move or referral to a specialist.

Florida Health Information Network Privacy and Security Policy

To ensure that the sharing of health records occurs in a secure, privacy-protected manner that supports good patient care, the Agency proposes these initial privacy policies of the Florida Health Information Network:

- The privacy and confidentiality of patient records is paramount;
- Authorization to access health records will be role-based, to limit access to the appropriate people;
- It is recommended that providers use two factor authentication to access health records;
- Connections to the network must use a secure and encrypted communication channel that meets the HIPAA Security Rule;
- Detailed logging of all requests for access will allow for accurate audit trails of all records;
- Patients must give their consent for the electronic exchange of their medical records;
- The Agency will foster the transparency of health care for Florida's consumers

Florida Health Information Network Development

The protections provided for health care records require a strong governing structure that will manage the operation of the network, proactively protect the security of patient records, and set policies that benefit patient care and public health.

For more information about this project contact the Florida Center for Health Information and Policy Analysis at (850) 922-5771. FHIN development documents can be obtained from the FHIN website: