

ROCHESTER RHIO

Regional Health Information Organization

Rochester RHIO and HIT in the community

In a large community with many different hospitals, labs, and other health care institutions, patients often see several providers and frequently receive medical care at multiple organizations. As few as two years ago, physicians from different practices or health care systems could not share patient health information electronically, making coordination of care, transitions and referrals difficult. Whether it was from primary care to specialist, community health center to emergency department, or from hospital to long term care facility, efforts to share patient information were slow and inefficient.

With the help of Rochester RHIO, doctors and authorized staff members are now able to see critical patient information such as lab results, radiology reports and images, hospital reports, medication information and insurance eligibility from any data provider in the nine-county Greater Rochester area.

Providers are using Rochester RHIO in three major ways:

- Authorized users are accessing the Virtual Health Record (VHR) for a patient-centric view of essential health information from more than 20 hospitals, labs, radiology providers, and insurers.
- Physicians are integrating electronic results delivery from the region's data providers directly into their electronic health record system via a single interface. The top ten EHR vendors in the region are participating with eResults Delivery.
- Practices are implementing a low-cost, certified EHR system that provides advanced interoperability and a path to "meaningful use".

About Rochester RHIO

Rochester RHIO, the regional health information organization, is a secure, electronic resource that thousands of health care providers in the Greater Rochester area are using to access essential patient information.

Rochester RHIO has grown significantly over the past two years. It began with an initial pilot of 26 doctors and five practices; since the community-wide launch in March 2008, Rochester RHIO has grown to serve more than 2,300 authorized health care providers including 680 physicians.

Because the VHR includes information ordered or provided by physicians from different practices, patients must sign a consent form to let their doctors view their health information electronically through Rochester RHIO. This process has proven simple for providers to implement, with 97 percent of patients giving consent. To date, more than 160,000 patients have signed "yes" on RHIO consent forms.

The health information exchange (HIE) is used in many different health care settings throughout the community. Small practices, large group practices, hospitals, outpatient clinics, behavioral health clinics, community health centers, urgent care and emergency services, nursing homes, and home care agencies are using Rochester RHIO to view patient information and provide better, more informed care.

EHR for everyone

Many physicians and practice managers are exploring electronic health record options and implementation. As of January 2010, Rochester RHIO is offering Elysium® EHR, a basic, cost-effective EHR opportunity for any practice. Elysium EHR is a fully-functional, CCHIT certified system.

The Elysium EHR offers advanced interoperability at a low cost, and can help providers meet federal “meaningful use” guidelines for HIT stimulus funds. There is no capital expense and no hardware costs to implement, and only a minimal monthly fee for service, support, and interface maintenance.

Prior to offering the Elysium EHR, Rochester RHIO has been supporting EHR adoption throughout the community as a part of its HEAL NY grants. Anthony L. Jordan Health Center, Westside Health Services, and ten behavioral health centers received assistance to implement EHR systems. Also, the Monroe County Medical Society Health Information Technology Service Bureau receives its funding from the RHIO’s HEAL grants. The HIT Service Bureau has successfully signed up 225 local physicians to receive funding and support to begin using electronic health records in their practices.

HIT helps doctors and improves patient care

Physicians and patients benefit significantly from health information technology. With Rochester RHIO, medical teams have complete, up-to-date information on their patients regardless of where or by whom they are treated in the nine-county Greater Rochester area. They’re able to spend less time tracking down patient information and more time *with* the patient—while being able to provide more informed care, diagnosis, and treatment.

Using Rochester RHIO and EHR technology also sets up providers and practices to earn up to \$44,000 in federal stimulus funds by meeting “meaningful use” guidelines.

Patients benefit from fewer repeated tests, easier second opinions, a reduced risk of mistakes caused by poor handwriting or incomplete records, and more informed care during office visits and emergencies.

2010 outlook

The local health care community will continue to focus on advancing HIT to improve patient care in the Greater Rochester area. Rochester RHIO is aiming to increase the number of HIE users and consented patients, and is continuing progress on several projects to advance the use of health information technology throughout the region.

The Rochester RHIO Patient Portal will launch in the first quarter to allow patients to search for providers who are using the RHIO, set consent preferences online, and request audit reports. Patients will also have the capability to link Personal Health Records (PHR) to their individual RHIO accounts.

Rochester RHIO is interfacing with elder care services and emergency medical services to connect providers with essential patient information that was previously not available electronically, and improve continuity of care in the community.

There is also a priority to increase the amount and types of data available to authorized exchange users. In 2010, more radiology images will be included, and information such as pre-hospital care documents and community care summaries will be added.

Accurate, comprehensive patient information allows health care providers to give efficient, informed medical care and treatment. Connecting data from disparate systems, helping physicians to implement electronic health records, and promoting HIT will help in the national effort to increase efficiency, lower costs, and uphold the highest standards and quality of care for the entire community.

Learn more about Rochester RHIO by visiting the website at www.RochesterRHIO.org, or calling the toll-free answer line at 877.865.RHIO.