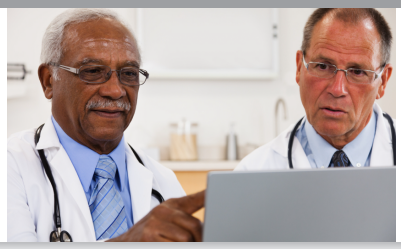

DC HIE

Promoting a Healthy DC through Direct Secure Messaging

DC-HIE is the statewide health information exchange for the District of Columbia. Our goal is to foster and sustain trust, collaboration and information sharing among health care providers and professionals in the District of Columbia. We aim to make it possible for the health care community to securely share patient health information electronically.

The DC-HIE is excited to offer Direct Secure Messaging (Direct). Direct is a method for securely sending messages between health providers and professionals using nationally recognized technology standards. Health care organizations throughout the country are using Direct to share patient data securely to support patient care, and this point-to-point secure messaging service is now available in the District through DC-HIE.

Use Direct Secure Messaging to achieve the secure exchange of health information electronically and:

- View a more complete picture of your patients' health
- Substantiate claims with private payers as well as with federal agencies such as the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
- Streamline administrative processes for receiving payment for your services
- Improve patient care

For a limited time, DC-HIE is offering Direct Secure Messaging for free!

Access the Patient Information You Need...Faster!

Direct offers many significant benefits, including giving health care providers and professionals access to more complete medical information to provide higher quality care for patients. Quickly share and view patient information electronically with other participating providers and eliminate the need to use slow, inconvenient and expensive tools like phone, mail and fax to send patient information. Direct is more secure and complies with national privacy standards.

Benefits of Direct Secure Messaging

- Improves communication between hospitals, laboratories, pharmacies and referring physicians for better care coordination
- Reduces instances of duplicate or redundant procedures, tests and medications
- Provides a more complete view of the patient and their care
- Increases privacy and security for patients by eliminating documents sitting on fax machines or being sent to the wrong fax number
- Achieve and qualify for Meaningful Use incentives

APPLYING IS AS Easy as 1-2-3!

1. Visit http://dhcf.dc.gov/page/subscribe-direct-secure-messaging
2. Complete the short form; the process takes about ten minutes.
3. Complete the Direct Secure Messaging subscription agreement, identity verification form and related documents.

Once the forms are complete, the DC-HIE staff will verify your documentation and issue login instructions for Direct.

It really is that simple!

Direct Secure Messaging FAQ

What is Direct?
Direct is a secure, point-to-point messaging service that allows registered providers and designees to send structured or unstructured information such as office notes, referrals and lab reports to each other. A provider directory is included to help find the Direct address(es) for an organization or provider. The standards and specifications for Direct were developed through The Direct Project within the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT.

Why is Direct important to providers?
The Direct Project expands the existing Nationwide Health Information Network standards and services to enable the simple, direct and secure transport of health information between health care providers and professionals.

What is the cost for Direct?
Direct is free through August 2013! After that time, a low monthly fee may be applied and invoiced annually.

How long does the subscription process take?
It only takes about 10 minutes to complete the Direct subscription form online. Once you have completed the form, it will take approximately 7 – 10 days to finalize your account information. You will receive email confirmation upon the creation of your account.

What information is needed for the subscription process?
The Authorized Representative for each organization will need to complete a Direct Secure Messaging subscription form online. Visit http://dhcf.dc.gov/page/subscribe-direct-secure-messaging to view the simple form required for participation.

Who is responsible for administering Direct in the District of Columbia?
The rollout of Direct Secure Messaging in DC is being led by the DC-HIE within the DC Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF) with governance from the DC-HIE Policy Board. DC-HIE is the statewide Health Information Exchange (HIE) for the District of Columbia. DC-HIE is managed, operated and staffed by DHCF.

Do I need to buy any special equipment to use Direct?
All you need to use Direct is an internet connection and a computer, tablet or smart phone to begin to securely exchange patient information electronically with other health care organizations, providers and professionals.

What devices does Direct work with?
Direct is compatible with any computer, tablet, smart phone or other device with internet access and a web browser.

Do I need to download any special software?
No, you do not need to download any software. You will log into a secure web portal to access your Direct account.

How does the security of Direct work?
Direct works the same way as "regular" email — users have their own inboxes, can send and receive secure messages, and can manage their own contacts, in addition to using the global address book. The "secure" part of the solution means that all messages and attachments are encrypted such that only the intended recipient(s) can decrypt and read messages/attachments.

Can I use Direct to send "regular" email?
Your Direct account can only be used to send secure messages to other users with Direct addresses.

What providers are included in the Direct Provider Directory?
The Direct Provider Directory includes organizations and individuals who are registered for the Direct service.

Why should I use Direct instead of regular e-mail?
Direct provides you with a method for communicating with your colleagues electronically using a HIPAA-compliant channel. Direct is being established as the standard for nationwide secure messaging. States, federal agencies and private health care organizations are all working toward making Direct the common way to communicate securely throughout the country.

What information about providers is included in the Provider Directory?
Name, specialty, mailing address, practice address, phone, fax numbers, email address and license information is included.

Can my staff have a Direct account?
Yes, as long as the health care organization, provider or professional they support has a Direct account.

Who do I contact if I need help with Direct?
If you have any questions about Direct, please send an email to info.dc-hie@dc.gov or call (202) 442-5988. DC-HIE staff are available 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Eastern (Monday - Friday).

District of Columbia Health Information Exchange
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http://dhcf.dc.gov/page/health-information-exchange

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