
Health Information Exchange (HIE) —

Using technology to improve healthcare

A Health Information Exchange (HIE) is formed when a network of healthcare organizations agree to follow nationally recognized standards to share electronic health information to improve patient care.

Secure systems are used to protect information and prevent unauthorized access. All systems must comply with the security rules of the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Participating in an HIE means that you consent to sharing your health information with healthcare providers who are part of the HIE. This may benefit you in the following ways:

- **Emergency treatment:** Medical staff can immediately check your record to see if you have allergies, health problems, test results, medications or previous concerns that may be important factors in helping them provide emergency care.
- **Reduced time and cost** – With access to information such as test results, healthcare providers can avoid duplicating tests, thereby reducing overall healthcare costs. And because your information is easily accessible, the need to complete the same forms at every visit is eliminated.



- **Improved care** – With access to information about your health history and medical care, including previous medications, lab results and treatments, your healthcare provider has a more complete picture of your overall health. This helps ensure he or she has the information needed to make better decisions about your care such as making recommendations and prescribing medications that will not have a negative impact on any other current medication or treatment.
- **Improved access to information** – You can receive an electronic copy of your medical information and share it with your healthcare providers securely over the Internet. Ultimately, this helps you take a more active role in your health.

Protecting your privacy

All healthcare providers participating in the Health Information Exchange must agree to follow written policies controlling access to information. These policies include federal and state privacy laws. In addition, technical safeguards include encryption, password protection and the ability to audit and track each viewer's usage of the system. No system is perfect, but healthcare providers believe the potential benefits of participating in an HIE outweigh potential risks.

If you have questions regarding Health Information Exchange, please call, 507.474.5680 or visit us online at winonahealth.org/HIE.
