



TRENTON HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE



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If you are like most people, your health care involves many providers and sites — doctors, nurses, hospitals, laboratories, pharmacies and many others. Many of these providers are starting to switch from using paper records to computerized ones, and Capital Health is making records more accessible through a Health Information Exchange (HIE).

What is the Trenton HIE?

A Health Information Exchange (HIE) allows your hospitals, doctors and other health care providers to share your personal health information (PHI) with each other in a secure, timely manner through their computer. This health information could include reports about your illnesses, injuries, allergies, medicines, and test results.

The Trenton Health Information Exchange (THIE) is operated by the Trenton Health Team, a group of healthcare agencies in the Trenton community.

What can the HIE do for me?

Participating in an HIE — that is, agreeing to share your health information with your healthcare providers — offers major benefits to you and your family.

Benefits Include:

- **Emergency Treatment**

— Medical staff can immediately know about your allergies, health problems, medications, and prior visits, helping them care for you without delay.

- **More complete and accurate information**

— The HIE gives your care providers greater access to the information needed to diagnose your health problems earlier. They will know more about you and your health history before they recommend treatment.

- **Improved Care**

— Access to information about care you received elsewhere gives a better, more complete picture of your health and provides information needed to provide the best care possible. That means your care providers can make sure the treatment they give doesn't interact badly with other treatments you may be receiving. For example, when you can't remember what medications you are taking, the HIE can make information about your conditions and medicines available to your doctors, so they will know the right thing to do instead of doing something that might be harmful.

Risks Include:

- **Data Breach**

— Although the HIE has special security features, it has the same risks as other areas of information. Trenton HIE has taken significant steps to protect your PHI. However, we cannot fully eliminate security risks inherent in handling such information.

- **Errors**

— The HIE is a tool to improve care. Just like a paper health record, if the health care provider does not enter the correct information, that information remains in the health record until it is corrected. However, computerized information can provide checks and balances that paper health records cannot.

How will my information be used?

PHI obtained through the Trenton HIE will be used in the same way it is currently used; for treatment, payment and operations reasons only. Policies that follow federal and state law limit how your information can be used or disclosed through the Trenton HIE. The HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices from your health care provider explains in detail how and why your information is used.

How does the HIE work?

In order for electronic personal health information (EPHI) to be obtained by your provider on his or her computer, all EPHI is stored in, and may pass through, the THIE secure server. When participating in the Trenton HIE, only your authorized health care providers will have access to the EPHI stored in that server.

Who can access my records?

Only your providers who are treating you and their staff who are given rights to the Trenton HIE can access your records through the Trenton HIE. For a current list of providers taking part in the Trenton HIE, visit www.TrentonHIE.org.

How secure is the Trenton HIE?

Special security features are used to keep your information secure and prevent your records from being accessed by anyone who is not allowed.

Even with all these security protections in place, if improper access does occur through the Trenton HIE, the law requires that you are notified and that the Trenton HIE and your participating hospital take steps to correct the problem.

What about my “sensitive” information?

“Sensitive information” that is specifically restricted by more protective state or federal laws will generally be kept “behind a wall” and disclosed only with your permission. Sensitive information includes information such as HIV/AIDS, venereal diseases, behavioral health treatment records, and genetic testing.

Other “Connected” HIEs

Trenton HIE will also be creating secure “connection” to health care providers who participate in other community-based HIE networks. For example, if you are treated by two doctors — one in the Trenton HIE and another in a different HIE — your two doctors could share your medical information through a secure computer connection.

The Trenton HIE will not connect to another HIE unless it meets Trenton’s high standards for privacy and security. You can learn more about Trenton’s connections to other HIEs by visiting www.TrentonHIE.org.

Can I access my own medical records?

With the Trenton HIE, your records are only available to participating health care providers (for example, your doctor). If you want copies of your medical records, you should contact your health providers directly.

How do I sign up?

There is no need to do anything further. Your health information is automatically stored in the Trenton HIE and will be made accessible to HIE participants unless you decide to “Opt Out.”

What if I don’t want to participate?

If you do not want your health information in the Trenton HIE, you must submit a completed Trenton HIE Opt-Out form, which is attached to this brochure, available for download at www.TrentonHIE.org or by calling Capital Health Guest Relations at 609.303.4280 (Hopewell) or 609.394.6336 (Regional Medical Center (Trenton)).

Once you submit this form, your information will not be accessible to anyone through the Trenton HIE, ***even in the case of an emergency***, and your providers will need to share your information with each other in the same way they have in the past (such as by telephone, fax, or mail).

If you previously submitted a Trenton HIE Opt-Out but now have changed your mind, you must complete, sign, and submit ***a cancellation form to cancel your previous decision to “Opt Out.”*** The cancellation form can be found attached to this brochure, or downloaded from www.TrentonHIE.org, or by calling Capital Health Guest Relations at 609.303.4280 (Hopewell) or 609.394.6336 (Regional Medical Center (Trenton)).

I still have questions. Who do I contact?

If you have additional questions about the Trenton HIE that are not covered in this brochure, please visit the Trenton HIE website at www.TrentonHIE.org or call Capital Health Guest Relations at 609.303.4280 (Hopewell) or 609.394.6336 (Regional Medical Center (Trenton)).

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