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Q&A

Image Exchange Customer Q&A

Rochester RHIO has been an eHealth Connect® Image Exchange customer since 2009. As RHIO's needs have evolved over time, eHealth Technologies has been able to provide innovative solutions to meet the needs of the providers, and ultimately the patients, in the HIE community.

What features/functionality were users looking for when you first launched?

We launched Image Exchange very early in our evolution as a health information exchange. Providing access to clinical images was a key feature in our clinical query portal and very important to us. It was important to reduce the number of images being transferred by CD because CDs are a security risk and a labor-intensive method to exchange data. The key features early on were:

- **A Diagnostic Quality Viewer** – Providers need to be able to view images from other sources with an appropriate diagnostic-quality viewer to review and compare clinical images.
- **Vendor Agnostic System** – The Image Exchange integrated with a variety of EHRs and HIE platforms.

How did those needs change over time?

As usage of the Image Exchange has grown, the need to add additional data types just keeps growing with increased utilization. We have recently added tomography and cardiology imaging, and soon we will have non-DICOM imaging available (i.e. colonoscopy, EKGs).

Other changes followed. In most cases, increased utilization has resulted in simplified workflow for clinicians. Image Enabled Results Delivery is popular with Rochester RHIO participants who benefit from the RHIO's electronic results delivery service. Our Last Mile results delivery service includes an embedded link to associated images for radiology reports.

And, in order to simplify workflow, especially for image intensive providers, we added a new service in the past few years: Transfer to PACS. Our participants appreciate the ability to download images and have full, easy access to images that are used to make clinical decisions.





At what point did you consider adding enhanced functionality for users to view images?

We opted to add new functionality whenever it became available from eHealth Technologies, in order to provide the optimal level of support for our community providers. Each expansion of Image Exchange services gave us the chance to bring in more providers who found benefit from the Image Exchange.

What benefits have users experienced now that they can view/download/share images across the HIE community?

Clinicians now depend on prior images being available for comparison and for supporting quick decisions in an emergency. The need for repeat imaging is decreased, which saves costs, time and patient exposure to radiation.

What advice would you give to an HIE organization considering adding this type of functionality?

Image Exchange is a service where usage varies by clinical setting. Images can be “pushed” or “pulled” according to the use case. It is helpful for providers because it adds to the unique value of their care setting. Clinicians in the Emergency Department at a hospital need quick access to prior images to avoid repeat imaging, and to speed decision-making. Radiology intensive providers (i.e. orthopedics, oncology) benefit from adding images right into their own PACS (imaging system). And, PCPs find value from image embedded results delivery. By highlighting the use cases, EHTs image exchange functionality rises to the top of this type of service. For Rochester RHIO, we find that providers are extremely satisfied with this service, and often cite our image exchange as a highly valuable component of our services.

About Rochester RHIO

Rochester RHIO is a secure electronic health information exchange (HIE) dedicated to serving New York's Greater Finger Lakes region, including Monroe, Allegany, Cayuga, Chemung, Genesee, Livingston, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates counties. Its suite of services allow health care professionals to securely and rapidly share records across institutions and practices, making patient information available wherever and whenever needed to provide the highest quality care. Patients benefit from fewer repeated tests, missing records and errors, while receiving more informed care during office visits and emergencies. RHIO's health information exchange process more than seven million clinical messages a month for 1.5 million residents. RHIO is a Qualified Entity of the Statewide Health Information Network of New York (SHIN-NY).