

Quality Departments



Why is the Health Information Exchange (HIE) important for Quality Departments?

The transformation of healthcare has illuminated the need for robust quality management processes and tools. Quality professionals have evolved from the retrospective chart reviewers to the driving forces of improving the quality of care and decreasing costs. This expanded role requires tools that match your needs: the Big Sky Care Connect (BSCC) HIE.

The HIE is critical in assisting the modern-day Quality Department. BSCC is a secure, electronic network that allows authorized healthcare providers the ability to appropriately access and share patient information across a statewide information network. It improves healthcare quality, enhances patient safety, improves health outcomes, and reduces overall healthcare costs by making health information available to participating healthcare providers and organizations.

How can my practice/organizations benefit from using the HIE?

BSCC HIE services include event notification, eHealth Exchange, medication feed, and DIRECT secure messaging. These services will benefit the Quality Department by making patient care more efficient, streamlining administrative tasks, engaging patients/improving their experience, achieving success in federal and state quality programs, and participating in population health management.

A transformed healthcare system requires the use of a real-time, interoperable HIE across the care provider landscape. Greater access to person-level health information is integral to improve the quality, efficiency, and safety of health care delivery.¹ BSCC is making the exchange and access of information more efficient for you and your practice.

What types of information can be shared to allow for collaboration with the HIE?

BSCC services will provide significant benefits to a participating organization's Quality Department including: **Access to up-to-date statewide patient health information at the point of care** – Access for treating providers allowing more informed, improved treatment while contributing to the reduction of healthcare costs, **Alert notifications** – providers receive alert notifications of patient discharges and emergency department visits assisting in reducing readmissions and increasing timely and coordinated care for patients, **Access to the national Veterans Administration (VA) system** – through the eHealth Exchange, treating community providers of veteran patients can access the VA system providing them visibility into the patient's medical history that is not available

¹ McGlynn, E.A., S.M. Asch, J. Adams, J. Keeseey, J. Hicks, A. DeCristofaro, and E.A. Kerr, "The Quality of Health Care Delivered to Adults in the United States." *New England Journal of Medicine* 2003 348: 2635-45. See also, Rosenbaum, R., "Data Governance and Stewardship: Designing Data Stewardship Entities and Advancing Data Access," *Health Services Research* 2010 45:5, Part II



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in their own Electronic Health Records (EHR), **Direct secure messaging** – allows secure exchange of patient information between individual healthcare providers from healthcare organizations statewide and with Indian Health Services (IHS), **Convenient access to results** – providers can avoid unnecessary tests and procedures, minimizing patient exposure and significantly reducing the number of duplicate laboratory and radiology tests ordered.

How does this impact Montanans?

The BSCC HIE will eliminate healthcare information gaps to improve Montana’s health. Montanans Medicare beneficiaries 65 and older have seen a minimal, 0.35%, decrease in hospital readmissions from 2013- 2015.² This measure has been a focus for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), CMS Quality Innovation Networks and Quality Improvement Organizations (QIN-QIO) and associated healthcare organizations. This decrease may indicate the hospitals’ Quality Departments have worked hard to change practices within their organization, and the HIE provides an additional solution to continue to drive down this number of readmissions.

How do I know my patient’s information will be secure with the HIE?

All patient information is stored securely and handled confidentially, meeting HIPAA standards. The HIE utilizes a single sign-on authentication service and Trusted Exchange Framework to thoroughly verify a user’s identity. Patient data access is tracked and audited in accordance with regulatory requirements.

² [https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/Medicare-Geographic-Variation/GV_PUF , State Report-Beneficiaries 65 and older \(ZIP\)](https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/Medicare-Geographic-Variation/GV_PUF_State_Report-Beneficiaries_65_and_older_(ZIP))