



CHIC's HIE-Bridge First to Receive State Approval for Health Information Exchange

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Duluth, MN. HIE-Bridge™—a health information exchange (HIE) that offers health care providers nationwide access to patient health care information—is the first HIE to be certified to operate in the State of Minnesota.

Certification means HIE-Bridge™ has demonstrated to the state's HIE Oversight Review Panel that it can meet federal and state requirements for governance, finances, legal and policy, infrastructure and operations—all designed to ensure meaningful use of electronic exchange of information and to protect the public interest.

HIE-Bridge™ is owned and operated by the Community Health Information Collaborative (CHIC), a Duluth-based nonprofit of 200 providers and health-related organizations in Northeastern Minnesota, that partnered with health care providers and IT experts to create the HIE.

“HIE-Bridge™ was created in partnership with health care providers to meet the health information needs identified by health care providers. Consequently, we're extremely pleased—though not surprised—that the State recognized the quality of our services,” said Cheryl Stephens, president and CEO of CHIC. “It's gratifying to be the first HIE in the State of Minnesota to be able to announce that we're open and ready for business.”

Secure, electronic exchange of patient health care records and insurance information will improve patient care and reduce costs. The state's oversight is designed to ensure that health care information follows the patient, prevents the fragmentation of health care information, ensures that HIEs adhere to nationally recognized standards and protects patient privacy and security.

In addition to the recent state certification, CHIC and HIE-Bridge™ also have participated in national initiatives designed to facilitate the secure, electronic exchange of health care data:

HIE-Bridge™ is the state's only HIE connected to the Nationwide Health Information Network (NW-HIN), a network developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to allow medical information to follow the consumer. HIE-Bridge™ was one of fourteen organizations in the country that began working with the federal government to develop the network in 2008.

CHIC also was among only 15 organizations in the country chosen by the Social Security Administration to submit patient medical records electronically, reducing time needed to make disability determinations. CHIC received a nearly \$1 million grant to provide electronic medical records to the Social Security Administration via NW-HIN, shortening the time needed to make a disability decision and improving the speed, accuracy, and efficiency of the disability program.

Duluth-based CHIC leverages information technology to help member organizations save precious healthcare dollars, make healthcare providers more efficient and to provide the foundation for future innovation. CHIC's nearly 200 members include hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities, tribal health organizations, higher education institutions and public health departments in 18 counties in northeast and north central Minnesota: Aitkin, Beltrami, Carlton, Cass, Chisago, Cook, Crow Wing, Isanti, Itasca, Kanabec, Koochiching, Lake, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Pine, St. Louis, Todd and Wadena. The area covers nearly 30,000 square miles and is home to 650,000 residents.

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