

## What is a Health Information Exchange?

A health information exchange (HIE) is a database tool, organized according to national standards, that allows different medical record systems to communicate with one another. HIE refers to both the technology (hardware and software) that stores the data and the process that sends and receives the information.

The benefits of an HIE include

- improved clinical care when providers have immediate access to complete medical records
- increased involvement for patients who monitor their own centralized medical record
- regulated electronic security for personal healthcare information
- reduced likelihood of errors involving duplicate tests, allergic reactions, and adverse drug interactions

## Who is Southern Tier HealthLink?

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to "connecting the dots" among the people, places, and equipment that deliver your healthcare services. We believe that you should be at the center of your healthcare network, with your doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals able to see the medical information they need to give you the best, most informed care possible.

We offer, manage, and monitor the health information exchange; it is our responsibility to make sure it is working securely and properly so that your information is available to those you authorize to see it.



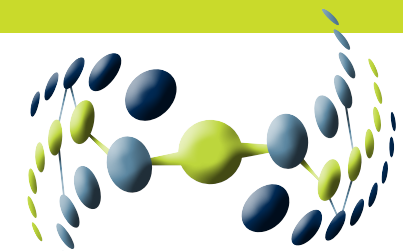
[www.sthlny.com](http://www.sthlny.com)



### Southern Tier HealthLink

In the former Lackawanna Train Station  
45 Lewis Street  
Binghamton, New York 13901

Telephone: (607) 651-9150  
Fax: (607) 651-9107  
email: [info@sthlny.com](mailto:info@sthlny.com)



*Connecting the dots  
for better healthcare*

**What you need to know  
about your health  
information exchange**



 Find us on Facebook: [Facebook.com/sthlny](https://www.facebook.com/sthlny)

 Follow us on Pinterest: [Pinterest.com/sthl](https://www.pinterest.com/sthl)

 Follow us on Twitter: [@nyhealthscape](https://twitter.com/nyhealthscape)



## Connecting The Dots

Through Southern Tier HealthLink's health information exchange (HIE) your healthcare provider will be able to view your entire medical record—as long as you grant permission. The HIE for our area is a central repository that stores “deposits” of medical records from hundreds of participating providers in the Southern Tier service area. This could include:

<i>contact information</i>	<i>procedures</i>
<i>medical &amp; family history</i>	<i>medications</i>
<i>doctor visits &amp; hospital stays</i>	<i>radiology images</i>
<i>diagnoses</i>	<i>allergies...and more.</i>

Think about having a single, centralized health record collected from any location where you receive healthcare. When you go for a second opinion, switch doctors, or are referred to a specialist, your new provider could see all of your previous treatments, lab work, and procedures at the touch of a button. Imagine how important this would be in an emergency or when you need medical attention away from home. If you grant consent, your doctors will be able to view your centralized medical record when and where it is needed.

## The Question of Consent

Your medical information will be collected in the HIE, but you control access to it through a consent process. When you visit your healthcare provider, you will be given an information sheet and a consent form. Copies of these documents can also be found on our website ([www.sthlny.com](http://www.sthlny.com)).

Giving consent is your decision. You cannot be denied medical care, and your insurance eligibility will not be affected if you do not consent to share your records through the HIE. You grant consent for each “legal entity.” When you fill out the consent form at the hospital or doctor’s office, you’ll have three choices for that legal entity\*:

**I GIVE CONSENT:** Allows the provider(s) named on the form to access your Health Information Exchange records if they have a healthcare relationship with you.

**I DENY CONSENT:** Denies access to your Health Information Exchange records, preventing the provider(s) named on the form from accessing them – EVEN in an emergency. (Your current healthcare providers would still have access to the records they keep on you at their location.)

**I CHOOSE NOT TO CONSENT:** Prevents the healthcare provider(s) named on the form from accessing your Health Information Exchange records– EXCEPT in an emergency.

You can change your consent choice at any time by submitting a new consent form.

### Important Note about Minors

In New York, the medical records of anyone between the ages of 10-18 have special protections; access through the HIE is denied for all healthcare providers except in the case of emergency.

\*Consent is granted for each “legal entity” (typically a hospital or hospital system, or a group of healthcare providers). You can choose to grant consent to one legal entity and deny it to another. Each legal entity is defined on the Participating Provider List that is found at [www.sthlny.com](http://www.sthlny.com).



## What about security?

Federal and state laws strictly protect the privacy and confidentiality of health information. New York State requires Southern Tier HealthLink and everyone that accesses information through the HIE to follow the same rules to protect the privacy and security of your records.

- Only doctors, nurses, hospitals, and their staff involved in your healthcare can access your health records, and only after you sign a consent form authorizing it.
- You can request a report of who has viewed your records through the HIE.
- Password and encryption safeguards keep records from being accessed without proper permission.
- Southern Tier HealthLink is required and committed to investigating any report of suspected unauthorized access. If unauthorized access to your record does occur, we will inform you right away and take steps necessary to ensure such access does not happen again.

## To Learn More

For the most current information, visit our website: [www.sthlny.com](http://www.sthlny.com). If you have questions, please call, email, or drop in at the Southern Tier HealthLink office.

We’re also happy to come and speak to interested community groups. Email us at [info@sthlny.com](mailto:info@sthlny.com).