

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.

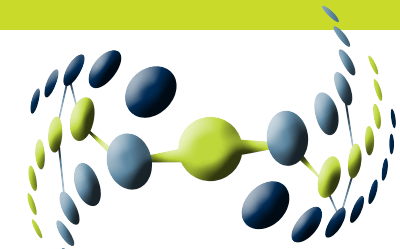
The benefits of an HIE include

- 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 NY?

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.



*Connecting the dots
for better healthcare*

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

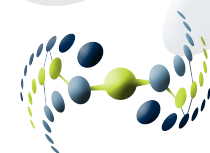
www.sthlny.com



Southern Tier HealthLink NY

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Connecting The Dots

Through Southern Tier HealthLink NY'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:

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|---|------------------------------|
| <i>contact information</i> | <i>procedures</i> |
| <i>medical and family history</i> | <i>medications</i> |
| <i>doctor visits & 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 or come to the Southern Tier HealthLink NY office, you will be given an information sheet, consent form and a current list of participating providers. Copies of these documents can also be found on our website (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. When you fill out the consent form at the hospital or doctor's office, you'll have three choices:

Yes: Allows access to your medical records for all participating healthcare providers as long as they have a healthcare relationship with you. *

No: Denies access to your medical records, preventing anyone from accessing them through the HIE—EVEN in an emergency. (Your current healthcare providers would still have access to the records they keep on you at their location.)

Unspecified: Prevents participating healthcare providers from accessing your medical records through the HIE—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 case of emergency.

*By law, you can modify your “Yes” consent to exclude one or more “legal entities” within the HIE by listing them on the consent form. Each legal entity is defined on the Participating Provider List that accompanies the Consent Form and is also available at 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 NY 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 NY 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. If you have questions, please call, email, or drop in at the Southern Tier HealthLink NY office.

We're also happy to come and speak to interested community groups. Email us at info@sthlny.com.