HealtheConnections™

Authorized User Policy & Procedure Training

Training Overview

- History of HealtheConnections
- Our Services
- HIPAA & the HIE
- Policy and Procedure Training
  - Consent
  - Emergency access
  - Access and multiple facilities
  - Audits
- Accessing the myConnections Portal
  - Demo of the system and/or HIE User Manual review*

*HIE User Manual review only required for self-training, along with Policy & Procedure

History of HealtheConnections

- Formed in 2010 as the Regional Health Information Organization (RHIO) for Central New York
- Manages and oversees the Health Information Exchange (HIE)
- HIE is the single access point for healthcare providers to view a patient's medical records
- 700+ participants in 11-county region
- Over 200 organizations contribute data directly to the HIE

Our Services

Patient Lookup

Real-time consolidated view of a patient's comprehensive health records

Direct Mail

Secure email system to communicate patient clinical information between healthcare professionals

Image Exchange

Access to and viewing of diagnostic-quality radiology image studies. Compare multiple studies at once and transfer images into radiology systems

myAlerts

Patient activity notifications sent to providers for emergency department encounters, in-patient hospital admissions and discharges

Query-Based Exchange

Access to statewide patient data from other RHIOs and New York State sources, as well as federal government data sources (VA and DoD)

Results Access & Delivery

Automated delivery of results, reports, and images through the HIE either to an EHR or through the myResults tab in the myConnections portal

Protected Health Information (PHI)

Protected Health Information (PHI) is any individually identifiable health information, which may include sensitive health conditions including, but not limited to:

- Substance Use Disorder
- Birth control and abortion (Family planning)
- Genetic (inherited) diseases or tests
- Any mention of HIV/AIDS
- Mental health conditions
- Sexually transmitted diseases

Redisclosure Notice: Any patient records that are accessed through HealtheConnections' health information exchange are subject to all applicable federal and state laws for redisclosure, including but not limited to Minor Consented Services, Substance Use Disorder, HIV/AIDS, Mental Health, and Developmental Disabilities. If such information is present in the HIE, law prohibits you from making any further disclosure of this information without the written consent of the person to whom it pertains. A general authorization for the release of medical or other information is NOT sufficient for this purpose. As an authorized user of the HIE, you are responsible for understanding and following the applicable laws.

HIPAA

HIPAA privacy and security rules must be followed for using the HIE, including, but not limited to, rules such as:

- Minimum Necessary Access
- Redisclosure requirements (State and Federal)
- Do not share your login credentials with anyone
- Do not look up yourself, family members, or friends

PHI should be securely shared using one of the following methods:

- Direct Mail
- Fax
- Email – **only** if the PHI file is encrypted and/or password protected

For more information about HIPAA policy, visit:
http://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/laws-regulations/index.html

Consent

NYS law requires that Participating Organizations obtain a patient's consent before viewing their PHI for non-emergency treatment

- HIE records may only be viewed for patients who provide an affirmative consent
- A patient's consent applies only to the Participating Organization that collected the consent form, not to all Participating Organizations
  - Patients only need to provide consent for a Participating Organization **one time**
  - A patient may change their consent value at any time by filling out a new consent form at each Participating Organization
- Participating Organizations must inform patients that ANY and ALL health information included in their health record will be available through the HIE
  - Direct patient to http://www.healtheconnections.org/map/#/
- Any authorized user at the Participating Organization may access a consenting patient's health record, with the appropriate security role
- Providers cannot refuse treatment to patients based on willingness to provide consent

Consent Values

- **I GIVE CONSENT** for the Provider Organization or Health Plan to access ALL of my electronic health information through HealtheConnections to provide health care services (including emergency care)
- **I DENY CONSENT EXCEPT IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY** for the Provider Organization to access my electronic health information through HealtheConnections
- **I DENY CONSENT** for the Provider Organization or Health Plan to access my electronic health information through HealtheConnections for any purpose, even in a medical emergency

Community-wide Deny Consent

If patient requests “Community-wide Deny” consent, the following options are available:

- The patient completes a Community-wide Deny consent form and your organization submits to HealtheConnections Support to enter the consent
- The patient can visit the HealtheConnections office, with photo identification to complete the form
- The patient can take the form and have it notarized and send it to HealtheConnections Support

Who can sign consent?

- **Patients under 18 years:** Parents, Legal Guardians, or State Officials can sign the consent form on behalf of the patient
- **Patients aged 18+ years:** May provide consent for themselves
- **Health proxy/representative:** If an agent is appointed by a patient in a health proxy document or due to incapacity to legally make healthcare decisions on behalf of the patient, that agent may provide consent for the patient

Consent Exceptions

Consent is not required for:

- Data sources sending patient medical records to the HIE, except for Substance Use Disorder (CFR 42)
- One-to-One Exchanges (Results Delivery)
- Emergency Situations, if patient has not yet consented, or has not selected “Deny to the Participating Organization” or “Community-wide Deny” consent
- De-identified Data
- Public Health access

Capturing Consent

Patient consent can be captured in two ways, depending upon your facility's capabilities:

- Hospitals and some practices capture patient consent in their EHRs, which is then sent over electronically to the HIE
- Most facilities log into HealtheConnections Patient Lookup and enter the patient's consent directly into the HIE

Maintaining Consent Forms

Patient consent forms must be kept with a patient's record for six (6) years

- Signed paper consent forms can be stored in patient charts OR electronic (scanned) copies of the consent forms can be kept on file
- Consents are subject to periodic auditing
  - A copy of the patient's signed consent form must be made available in the event of an audit

Minor Consented Services Access Override

Patients under 18 years old can override parental/guardian consent for a minor consented service

- An override can only take place if the parent/guardian has not yet consented or has selected “Deny” or “Deny, Except in an Emergency”
  - A minor cannot override a “Give” consent provided by the parent/guardian
  - FAQs are available for minor consent override
- To activate the override, a minor must sign an override consent form to give the participating organization permission to access his/her health records only when the minor is physically present
- The override will only remain in effect for the duration of the visit and will expire when the authorized user logs out of the patient’s record when the encounter is complete

Emergency Access

- **“Break the Glass” access may only be used to access a patient record in the case of emergencies that require emergency treatment**, in accordance to Public Health Law Section 2504(4)
- The Practitioner determines, in his or her reasonable judgment, that information that may be held by or accessible through the HIE may be material to emergency treatment

Access at Multiple Facilities

- Users will only need one* username and password; however, when logging in, the user must select the facility for which patient records are being accessed
- Patient consent applies only to the facility at which it was given

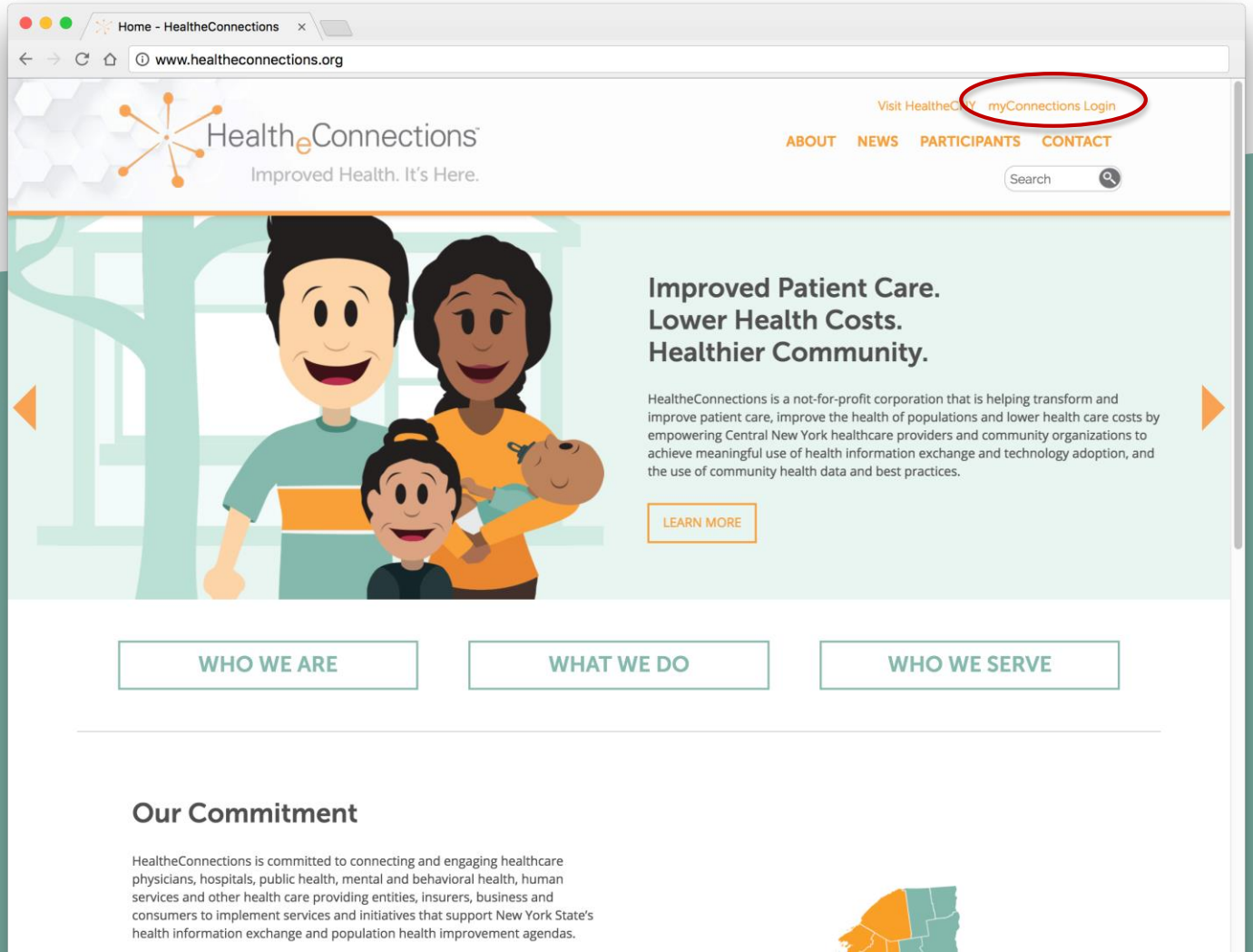
* Public health users may require two (2) sets of login credentials if they use the HIE as both a Clinical Authorized User (consent required) and as a Public Health Authorized User (consent not required)

Audits

- Access to patient records are audited:
  - Break the Glass events are audited daily
  - Public Health non-consented access is audited weekly
  - Each Participating Organization is required to attest to an annual audit of patient consents, user accesses of patient information, and user logins
  - Same-name audits
- Patients can request audits, through a Participating Organization or directly from HealtheConnections, of accesses to their records

Accessing myConnections

From the HealtheConnections homepage, click on “myConnections Login” link and enter username and password to log in



Important Information

HealtheConnections Support:

- Email: support@healtheconnections.org
- Direct Email: support@hiemail.healtheconnections.org
- Phone: 315-671-2241 ext. 5

Training Materials:

- HIE User Manual accompanies the Authorized User Training
- Additional materials and forms are available at: http://www.healtheconnections.org/what-we-do/hie-services/training-materials/

myConnections:

- Use “Forgot Password” on the myConnections login page for quick and easy password resets

For more information, visit:
www.healtheconnections.org