

Health Information Technology Overview

January 23, 2025



Vermont Agency of Human Services

Agenda

- Health Information Technology 101
- Benefits
- Unified Health Data Space Overview
- Health Information Exchange Steering Committee

Health Information Technology (HIT): Foundational Concepts

- What is HIT?
 - Technology systems designed to collect, store, and manage patient health data.
- Why does it matter?
 - Improves patient care, streamlines provider workflows, and supports better decision-making.
- What is the goal of HIT?
 - Deliver better care to patients, improve the health of the overall population, and reduce costs.
- Examples:
 - Electronic Medical Records (EMRs), Electronic Health Records (EHRs), and Health Information Exchange (HIE).

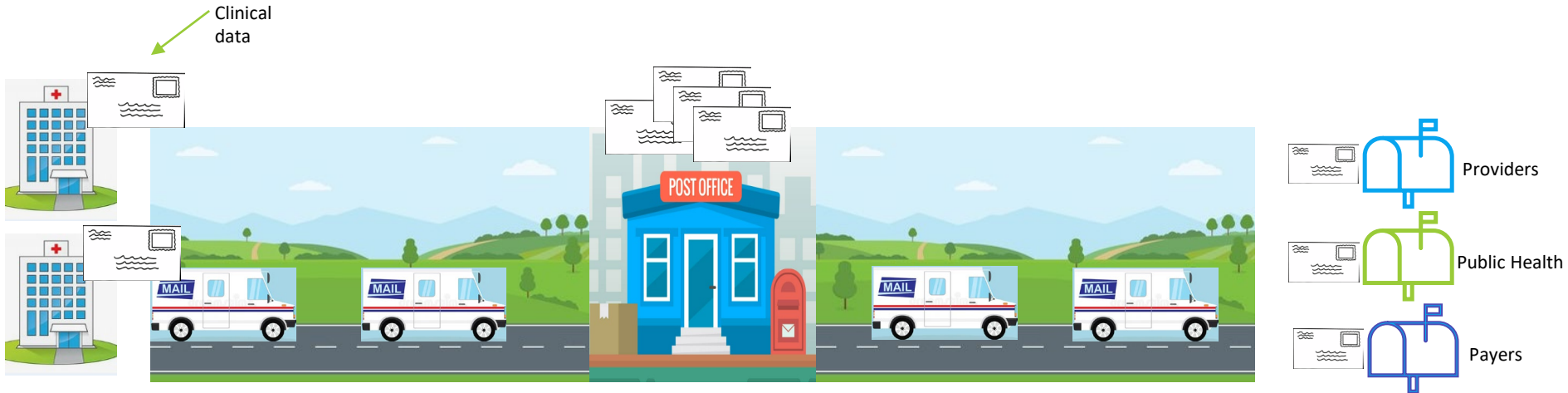
Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) vs. Electronic Health Records (EHRs)

- EMRs
 - Essentially a digital version of patient paper charts.
 - Specific for treatment of patients within one facility or by one provider.
 - Track data over time of patients.
- EHRs
 - Does what EMR's do, and more.
 - Designed to reach beyond the facility/provider using it and
 - Built to share information, such as patient history, lab results, prescriptions, etc.
 - Focuses on whole-person care and coordination.

Health Information Exchange (HIE)

- What is HIE?
 - Enables secure sharing of patient health information across providers, both through data put straight into an EHR by the HIE and by enabling access to a provider portal.
- What's its purpose?
 - Seamless data flow and access across providers, labs, hospitals, and public health.
- Why does it matter?
 - Prevents redundant tests.
 - Enhances patient care coordination between providers.
 - Improves population health reporting.
- Example: VITL is the legislatively designed operator of the Vermont Health Information Exchange (VHIE).

Post Office Analogy



VHIE – Operated by VITL (per statute)

Post Office Infrastructure

- ✓ Roads
- ✓ Post Office
- ✓ Mail Trucks

National Standards

- ✓ Letter – stamp, address, envelope
- ✓ Transportation standards (vehicles registration, driving rules, road signs)

Law, Rules, Regulations, Governance

- ✓ Mailbox Privacy
- ✓ Post Office process/procedures
- ✓ Traffic law

HIE Infrastructure

- ✓ Integration Engine
- ✓ MPI
- ✓ Terminology Services

National Standards (Interoperability)

- ✓ USCDI (U.S. Core Data for Interoperability)
- ✓ CMS, CDC, ONC, SAMHSA
- ✓ FHIR (Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources)

Law, Rules, Regulations, Governance

- ✓ HIPAA, Federal, State laws rules regulations
- ✓ Data Governance

Benefits of Health Information Exchange:

Current:

- Comprehensive electronic patient information, **when and where needed.**
- Allow medical professionals to have **complete and current** information for clinical decisions.
- Test result and imaging results are always available, **eliminating repeated tests and imaging.**
- **Real-time** aggregation to detect patterns.

Future plans include:

- Quality and payment information derived from record of care.
- Patients have access to their own records.

Hospital Electronic Health Records Landscape

Currently there are four Electronic Health Record vendors connected to the VHIE from various hospitals in Vermont and New Hampshire.

Electronic Health Record Vendor	Count	Percentage
Epic	4	25%
Oracle (formerly Cerner)	5	31%
TruBridge (formerly CPSI)	3	19%
Meditech	4	25%

*As of 1/21/25, includes 2 NH hospitals, the VPCH, and counts UVMHN hospitals individually.

Vermont Health Information Exchange Goals:



Create 1 health record for every person



Better health outcomes



Improved healthcare operations



Use data to enable investment and policy decisions

The Unified Health Data Space (UHDS)

- The Unified Health Data Space (**UHDS**) is a collaborative initiative to streamline data services required to improve healthcare in Vermont.
- Costs/usage of technology will be shared among participants to avoid duplicative efforts and purchases.
- UHDS is an integral part of reform efforts supporting a broad spectrum of healthcare stakeholders/uses;
 - ✓ Point of Care (Providers)
 - ✓ Quality (ACO Provider Networks, Payers)
 - ✓ Policy Evaluation & Regulation (GMCB, Healthcare Reform, Blueprint)
 - ✓ Patients (Personal Health Responsibility)
 - ✓ Population Health (Health Equity, Public Health)
- UHDS will provide those with authorized access to needed information to key stakeholders in the healthcare arena including:
 - **Clinical** data
 - **Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder** data
 - **Social Drivers of Health (SDoH)** data
 - **Public Health** data

Steering Committee – 18 Representatives

VOTING MEMBERS

Will Dempsey - Chair
(Agency of Human Services)



Emma Harrington
(VAHHS)



Eric Schultheis
(Health Care Advocate)



Jessie Hammond
(Vermont Dept. of Health)



Jodi Frei
(OneCare Vermont)



Victor Morrison
(Person Advocate)



Sandy Rouse
(Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice)

Jimmy Mauro
(BCBS of VT)



Mary Kate Mohlman
(Bi-State Primary Care)

Ken Gingras
(Vermont Care Partners)



Helen Labun
(Long Term Care Advocate)



John Saroyan
(Practice Innovation Lead)



Rick Dooley
(Independent Providers)



Song Nguyen
(Health Equity Expert)



NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Beth Anderson
(VITL)



Andrea DeLaBruere
(Agency of Digital Services)



Steven Andrews
(Green Mountain Care Board)



Vacant
(Privacy Expert)



HIE Steering Committee

According to 18 V.S.A. § 9351, the HIE SC is:

1. Involved in the annual Health Information Exchange (HIE) Plan and provide insights that AHS uses for scoping the next calendar years Plan and setting priorities within that work.
2. Charged with consulting on the administration of the HIE Plan during each year and they are updated throughout the year by regular meetings.

Our focus is on building a multidisciplinary, diverse team of experts to ensure compliance, build engagement, and ensure representation within our HIE.

Stakeholder Engagement and Governance Process

Steering Committee

- Comprised of members representing different components of the health system
- Routinely adding new roles
- **Purpose:** sets direction and reviews operational progress

Data Governance Council

- Host meetings open to the public
- <https://healthdata.vermont.gov/vermont-health-information-exchange-data-governance>
- **Vision:** Function as a collaborative oversight body to establish data governance policies that ensure the value and use of data in Vermont's Unified Health Data Space is maximized while also ensuring its quality, privacy, and security. Ensure people are at the center of their health data and provide ongoing patient information education.
- [HIE Data Governance Council Charter](#)

Annual Strategic Planning

- [Health Information Exchange \(HIE\) Strategic Plan](#) is required by [18 V.S.A. § 9351](#)
- HIE Steering Committee collectively assesses results of current year, set direction and priorities for future year(s)

Green Mountain Care Board

- Per [18 V.S.A. § 9351](#) Green Mountain Care Board is required to approve/reject/modify the Strategic Plan annually

Transparency is important, all materials can be found on our website at:

- <https://healthdata.vermont.gov/>