

Frequently Asked Questions

What is health information exchange?

Health information exchange allows your health information from one of your health care providers to be available electronically to your other health care providers if they participate in electronic information exchange services.

Texas Health participates in several health information exchange services including:

- [Healthcare Access San Antonio](#) (HASA): the Health Information Exchange for counties in South Central Texas, the Dallas Fort-Worth area and parts of West Texas
- [Care Everywhere](#)
- [Carequality](#)
- [eHealth Exchange](#)

Why is health information exchange important, and how will I benefit from participating?

Health information exchange services give health care providers access to the patient's health information for continued care and contribute to the coordination of care among various providers. This coordination helps the health care team meet your needs in a more effective and timely manner.

Health information exchange may:

- Reduce the possibility of medical errors due to incomplete or inaccurate information.
- Improve appropriate treatment recommendations.
- Improve patient-physician communications, as well as communications across the continuum of your care.
- Reduce the need for you to manually pick-up and/or deliver medical records.
- Reduce orders for duplicate test and procedures.

What does health information exchange mean to my provider(s)?

Health information exchange gives providers convenient access to timely information about patients to help facilitate decisions based on more comprehensive information. Health information exchange services provide patient records containing information from all participating care points regardless of where the care was provided. They save the providers time in tracking down important patient information and give the providers additional information to consider in developing your treatment plans.

Are my records private and secure?

Yes. The privacy and security of your health information is very important to Texas Health. Information is encrypted during transmission of the information between systems, and health care providers have a secure login to access your information. Policies and procedures are in place to maintain the confidentiality and appropriate use of your information as described in the provider's Notice for Privacy Practices.

Is my health information automatically shared through health information exchange services?

No. Although your information is stored within electronic systems, Texas Health requires patient authorizations for your health information to be viewable or shared through health information exchange services. When you arrive for an appointment or visit at a participating provider, you will be asked to sign an authorization which will allow you to permit other providers access to your information. Specific applications or solutions may require additional authorization at the point of care by the sending organization.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are my rights as a patient? Can I choose not to participate in Texas Health's health information exchange services?

It is your right as the patient to not share your patient information electronically with health information exchange services. When presented with the authorization, you can elect to opt-out of health information exchange services. By opting-out, your information will not be shared with your other providers through health information exchange services. The regional health information exchange (HASA) will display only your name, address, gender, date of birth and opt-out status.

How does my choice to participate in health information exchange affect me?

Each of your providers who are participating in Texas Health's health information exchange services will obtain from you an authorization to share your information. If you elect to opt out, none of your information from that visit or any prior visit will be available by providers through health information exchange services. Your most recent choice controls all prior treatment information from all participating facilities and providers.

If I agree to participate, can I choose to decline to share my information at a later time?

Yes. Participation in health information exchange services is voluntary, and you will have the right to change your mind at any time. If you decide to change your participation option, contact your provider, a Health Information Management (Medical Records) department at one of Texas Health's facilities, or submit an online revocation request at www.texashealth.org/hie.

If I decline to participate but agree to participate at a later time, will my past medical history be available during the time I was not participating?

Yes. At the time you elect to participate in Texas Health's health information exchange services, your past and future information will be viewable by your providers.

As a legally authorized representative for the patient, am I able to sign authorizations for the electronic exchange of the records? (Ex. Biological Parent/Legal Guardian for minor, healthcare agent for activated Power of Attorney, etc.)

Yes.

Can my spouse or domestic partner sign authorizations to share information on my behalf?

No, not unless the person qualifies as the legally authorized representative.

Can I receive a copy of the records that my provider obtained through health information exchange services?

Yes. To receive a complete medical record, please contact each facility that provided care to you.

Can I request changes to my health record or other information included in health information exchange services?

Yes. If there is information within your health record that you would like amended, please contact the facility or provider's office in which the original documentation was created.

Who should I contact if I have additional questions about health information exchange?

If you have questions about how your health information was used for your care, visit with your health care provider at any time.