What is Missouri Health Connection?

Missouri Health Connection is Missouri’s state-designated entity to oversee the development of a statewide health information network that will improve public health and patient care, reduce costs and empower consumers. Missouri Health Connection is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization dedicated to connecting Missouri’s patients and providers through a secure health information network. Missouri Health Connection has been awarded $13.8 million in federal funding to underwrite the planning and implementation process that will ensure patients, providers, physicians, hospitals and other health care organizations have access to critical medical record information in order to improve patient care and increase efficiency.

Our goals are to:

- Improve the quality of medical decision-making and the coordination of care;
- Provide accountability in safeguarding the privacy and security of medical information;
- Reduce preventable medical errors and avoid duplication of treatment;
- Improve the public health;
- Enhance the affordability and value of health care; and,
- Empower Missourians to take a more active role in their own health care.

The effort will also create more Missouri jobs and help ensure Missouri physicians, hospitals and other providers qualify for additional incentives that could represent nearly $400 million into the Missouri economy. Missouri Health Connection is governed by a public-private board of directors featuring private practice physicians, consumer advocacy groups, representatives from state government, legal experts and private health care organizations. More than 80 individuals from throughout the state have been involved in the planning process since 2009.

What are Missouri Health Connection’s benefits to providers, physicians, hospitals?

Being part of Missouri Health Connection has many benefits for providers, physicians and hospitals, including but not limited to:

- Access to a comprehensive health information network that spans the entire state of Missouri, not just a single region, to collect real-time patient health information;
- One connection to view patient data from all MHC members including lab results, transcribed reports, radiology results, encounter history, and claims data;
- Secure communication between all health care provider members of MHC;
- Reduced operating costs by delivering data directly into an electronic health record system (EHR), no faxing;
- Automated safeguards to help prevent medical errors;
- Minimized development of costly interfaces;
- Quality, immunization and Public Health reporting; and
- Assisting providers meet Meaningful Use requirements, thus allowing them to also secure monetary incentives.

How is Missouri Health Connection organized and who is involved?

Missouri Health Connection is a public-private non-profit organization overseen by a board of directors including members from state government, private health care organizations, private practice physicians, professional organizations, and consumer advocacy groups. We have had more than 80 individuals statewide participating in the planning process over the past couple years which is a testament to the importance of the project.
How will the Missouri Health Connection work?

Electronic health records (EHR) exchanged through the statewide health information network will allow a doctor seeing a patient in one part of the state to share or retrieve his/her health information from another health care provider (e.g. hospital, lab, or surgeon) in Missouri - instantly and accurately - to ensure quick, quality care.

Who is Missouri Health Connection’s Vendor?

Missouri Health Connection has contracted with InterSystems Corporation, a privately held software company with offices in 25 countries and corporate headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts. InterSystems has over 30 years of experience as a healthcare informatics specialist providing advanced technology and their client list includes Epic Systems, GE Healthcare, Kaiser Permanente, Cedars-Sinai, QuadraMed, Allscripts, Siemens Medical, Sunquest, and the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. MHC will use InterSystem’s HealthShare platform which is a strategic healthcare informatics that enables sharing of patient information across multiple systems and active analytics to drive informed action. Working with InterSystems to build the Missouri Health Connection network will provide health care providers with fast, secure access to electronic health information. MHC’s HealthShare-based statewide health information network will be used to serve a population estimated at more than six million patients in Missouri.

How will the Missouri Health Connection ensure the privacy and security of the health information?

Missouri Health Connection is committed to providing accountability in safeguarding the privacy and security of medical information. MHC is working with its technical service provider to create a secure health information network that ensures:

- Only registered providers can access data
- True identities of data senders and data receivers are verified
- Role Based Access: Unlike paper systems, MHC will be built to only allow authorized individuals to view personal health information on a "need-to-know" basis
- MHC will be able to audit and keep track of who accesses or changes information

Additionally, MHC's Legal & Policy Workgroup is providing guidance on developing and maintaining policies that protect privacy and strengthen security.