
HealtheConnections RHIO: More than one million records, over 400,000 patients' consent.

HealtheConnections, the RHIO covering the Central New York area, recently met and surpassed two impressive milestones: Amassing patient records for clinical access to over 1 million of the region's population of 1.4 million, along with securing consent from over 400,000 patients.

"We've been pleasantly surprised by both providers and patients," said Rob Hack, Executive Director of HealtheConnections since the project began, in 2010. Hack sees these combined milestones of data and consent as reinforcing the relationship between patients and their physicians. "People have perhaps overemphasized the 1.1 million records," he said, "but those 400,000 unique consents really show the patient trust angle to it."

Since October 2010, when HealtheConnections began working with providers, it has consolidated electronic medical records from 17 of the 19 regional hospitals, five diagnostic centers, and 94 physician practices. After just two years, this represents around 80% of the region's patient records.

"On the hospital side, we've had a lot of support," said Karen Romano, Director of Provider Engagement Services, "And we're out on the street, literally, in offices, making phone calls, in constant contact. We reach out to the medical societies; any place where we can hang our hats."

Rob Hack sees these successes as a testament to a well-informed healthcare environment, one which increasingly understands the value of health IT.

"We were the last RHIO set up in New York State, so we have a bit of catch-up to play with the other RHIOs," he said, "But we've gotten terrific support from the other executive directors.

"And we don't compete," he added. "It's a great collaboration."

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