Health Information Exchange and How Charles River Community Health Shares Your Protected Health Information to Coordinate Your Care

The privacy of your healthcare information is of the highest importance to Charles River Community Health. We are very careful about protecting and sharing information about you.

What is Health Information Exchange?

Health information exchange is a secure, electronic way that we use to communicate with healthcare providers outside of Charles River Community Health who have a role in your care. It is faster, safer, and more efficient than the usual ways of sharing health information, which include phone, fax, mail, and email. Health information exchanges are used by most medical institutions. **Your health information will automatically be made available by Charles River Community Health through Health Information Exchange**. We can provide your information to your healthcare team outside of Charles River Community Health, and your other healthcare team can provide it to us securely and quickly.

How does Health Information Exchange work?

Your Charles River Community Health electronic medical record is stored at Charles River Community Health. The health information exchange does not hold or store your information. It is simply the system that sends the information to and from us and your other healthcare teams.

Is it safe to send private health information through Health Information Exchange?

After years of using Health Information Exchange, we know that it is safe and secure. It is also the quickest way to exchange your private medical information with your healthcare team outside of Charles River Community Health. Health Information Exchange has strong security measures in place. This protects your information. Your information is locked and encrypted when it is sent using health information exchange.

What kind of information does Charles River Community Health send using Health Information Exchange?

Here are some examples of information we might send:

- After an appointment, a summary of your care is created. This might include information about your medical conditions, medications, and allergies. The summary helps your other healthcare team members know what kind of care you are getting.
- After you are discharged, the hospital can forward a summary of your hospital stay to the doctor handling your follow-up care. This means your doctor doesn't have to ask for your medical records.
- Your laboratory test results can be shared with your care team, including specialists. This helps coordinate your care and reduces the need for repeat tests.

- Emergency room doctors can quickly and easily find important information about your health and medical issues. This speed up your care, which is especially important in an emergency situation.
- For patients with certain sensitive conditions, Health information exchange will not be used unless you give special permission. Sensitive information includes HIV and substance abuse treatment records.

What happens if I do not want to share now?

Nothing changes. Without your permission, we cannot send your information using the health information exchange, even in an emergency.

You may opt-out at any time by completing our Health Information Exchange Opt-Out Form. If you opt-out and later change your mind, you may opt back in at any time by completing our Cancellation of Health Information Exchange Opt-Out Form. The forms are available at our front desks and on our website.

Your health information will continue to be sent using other methods such as fax, mail, and email. These methods are slower and less secure than health information exchange.

Who else is using health information exchange?

Most Charles River Community Health patients are sharing to health information exchanges.

Most healthcare organizations are using health information exchange.

Charles River Community Health participates the following Health Information Exchanges:

> Care Everywhere
>
> Quality Care
>
> Mass HIway

I still have questions.

If you have questions about this notice or want more information, you may contact the Associate Director of Patient Safety, Risk, & Compliance or the Chief Technology and Information Officer:

Associate Director of Patient Safety, Risk, & Compliance:

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