

**For Immediate Release**

## **Indiana and Ohio Health Information Exchanges Connect for Nation's First Live, Multi-Region Clinical Information Exchange**

*Live exchange will allow secure electronic exchange of health information, reduce duplication, improve efficiency, improve patient care and further the nation's goal to interconnect healthcare*

Bloomington, IN; Cincinnati, OH; Indianapolis, IN; September 3, 2009 – The day when your medical information follows you electronically wherever you go just came one day closer to reality.

Three Indiana and Ohio organizations today started securely sending clinical test results, reports and other medical information among their health information exchanges (HIEs), a first in the U.S. These HIEs – HealthBridge in Cincinnati, Ohio, Indiana Health Information Exchange (IHIE) in Indianapolis, Indiana and HealthLINC in Bloomington, Indiana – have each been innovators and pioneers in a national trend to enable medical information to flow electronically between doctors and hospitals.

These organizations have been exchanging health information securely *within* their regions for years. But, now they facilitate exchange *among* their regions as well, using clinical information standards to enable the transfer of data.

For example, if a baby goes to a hospital in Indianapolis, doctors at her pediatrician's office in Bloomington can now access her current medical information, including test results and radiology notes – so the information follows the patient.

“This connectivity among communities will undoubtedly mean fewer repeated tests and better care coordination between rural and urban providers,” stated J. Marc Overhage, MD, PhD, CEO of IHIE. “If a patient has a provider in a different community, as long as they are part of one of the three HIE networks, their care teams will now have more complete medical information available to them much more quickly, enabling more efficient care and better health outcomes.”

These health information organizations represent some of the largest and most successful health information networks in the nation, connecting more than 15,000 physicians, 50 hospitals and 12 million patient records. The secure health information networks provide faster, more accurate delivery of information in the doctor's office, fewer repeated tests, faster follow-up care, better health outcomes and lower health care costs.

“We know we can improve patient care by seamlessly and securely exchanging health information because we have been doing it in our own regions for years,” said Robert Steffel, CEO of HealthBridge. “This connectivity helps pave the way for more doctors and patients to have the critical information necessary for high quality care regardless of where a patient lives.”

Linking all three HIEs was months in the making. In this first phase, the Indiana Health Information Exchange will be sending information *to* HealthLINC and HealthBridge providers. Full interconnectivity, meaning that clinical information will flow in both directions among all HIEs, will be implemented by mid-September.

In 2007, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the National Coordinator awarded contracts to HealthLINC, HealthBridge and Regenstrief Institute (IHIE) through the National Health Information Network. The HIEs worked together as part of the NHIN Cooperative to securely exchange

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data including summary patient records for providers and patients. This initiative demonstrated a variety of capabilities between HIEs.

“Today’s go-live represents a real milestone in the use of technology in health care,” said Dr. Todd Rowland, Executive Director of HealthLINC. “This is the first real-time, live, ongoing health information exchange between separate communities. Previous demonstrations have used test data or been within a single organization using the same technology system.”

For the patient, this connectivity means improved sharing of health information among their providers without the total burden being upon them and their family. For office staff, results and documents will be at their fingertips in organized electronic charts, not phone calls and faxes away.

“Coordination of care requires information sharing. While many medical practices have systems that can share information internally, the connection between different regions and organizations allows me to track patient results from many labs or specialists,” said Dr. Jim Laughlin of the Southern Indiana Pediatrics group. “It is only through this kind of information sharing that we can hope to coordinate care in an efficient manner.”

#### About HealthBridge

HealthBridge was founded in 1997 as a community effort to share health information electronically in the Greater Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky tri-state area. HealthBridge has now grown to be one of the nation’s largest and most successful health information exchanges. Each month HealthBridge enables roughly 3 million clinical lab tests, radiology reports, and other clinical information to be transmitted to authorized physicians through HealthBridge’s secure electronic network. For more information about HealthBridge, see [www.healthbridge.org](http://www.healthbridge.org)

#### About HealthLINC (Bloomington)

HealthLINC is a health information exchange formed by Bloomington Hospital and the physician community in Southern Indiana. This community-based organization leads the HIE effort on behalf of healthcare stakeholders in Monroe, Orange and surrounding counties in South Central Indiana. HealthLINC’s key responsibilities are to establish a shared vision and goal for the HIE while representing community-wide stakeholder interests to support a fully integrated electronic healthcare delivery system. To learn more about HealthLINC, see [www.healthlinc.org](http://www.healthlinc.org)

#### About Indiana Health Information Exchange (Indianapolis)

Indiana Health Information Exchange, Inc. (IHIE) is a non-profit corporation formed by the Regenstrief Institute, private hospitals, local and state health departments, BioCrossroads, the state’s life sciences initiative, and other prominent organizations in Indiana. IHIE is the nation’s most respected health information exchange organization and one of the nation’s only health information exchange organizations providing chronic disease and preventive health services ([www.qualityhealthfirst.org](http://www.qualityhealthfirst.org)). It is dedicated to supporting communities by providing services that enable the right medical information to get to the right provider at the right time to enhance patient care. To learn more, visit [www.ihie.org](http://www.ihie.org). The Regenstrief Institute is an internationally recognized informatics and healthcare research organization, with one of the largest and most comprehensive medical informatics laboratories in the world.

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