WEST VIRGINIA HEALTH INFORMATION NETWORK

PATIENT NOTICE

Your health care provider has agreed to participate in the West Virginia Health Information Network (WVHIN), a Health Information Exchange (HIE). The WVHIN's HIE provides the fast and secure exchange of test results and reports among hospitals, labs, x-ray facilities, doctors and insurance companies.

WHO WILL HAVE ACCESS TO MY HEALTH RECORD?

Doctors, hospitals, pharmacies, insurance companies and other health care providers that are participants of the WVHIN's HIE will be able to see your health records when they are treating you or when paying for your health care. They may receive an alert when you become hospitalized or are seen for emergency care.

WHAT INFORMATION IS IN MY ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORD?

Your health care provider uses an electronic medical record to keep track of the treatment provided to you. This electronic record may include your…

- medical history
- lab and imaging results
- medications
- allergies
- known drug reactions
- doctor's and nurse's notes

WVHIN's HIE **is not** a complete record of your health history. It is simply a way for your health care providers to access the health information they need to provide you with the best possible care.

WHAT ABOUT MY SENSITIVE HEALTH RECORDS?

Federal and State laws protect the privacy of certain kinds of medical records. These include…

- drug or alcohol abuse treatment records
- psychotherapy notes
- goods and services that you have paid for out-of-pocket and request to keep private

When required by law, your consent will be obtained before the WVHIN's HIE will allow the sharing of your sensitive health records.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO ME?

WVHIN's HIE allows doctors and hospitals, pharmacies, insurance companies and other health care providers to view all of your available health records in order to provide you with better care, to coordinate your care, and/or to ensure proper payment is made for the services you receive. WVHIN's HIE may prevent you from having to fill out the same forms and carry your lab, x-ray results and medications to different doctors. Sharing your health record through the WVHIN's HIE may prevent you from having to have tests repeated. Most importantly, sharing your health record through

the WVHIN's HIE may allow your doctors to have access to life saving information in the event of a medical emergency.

ARE THERE PRIVACY RISKS AND HOW IS MY PRIVACY PROTECTED?

Doctors, hospitals and anyone else who is treating you are already responsible for keeping your health records private. The only added risk is that your health record will now be seen through the computer rather than by mail or fax.

The WVHIN uses modern technology to keep your health records private and safe. The WVHIN protects your privacy by…

- encrypting your health record so only the people who need to see it can
- requiring use of passwords
- tracking who looks at your health record through the WVHIN's HIE

DO I HAVE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WVHIN?

To allow your health record to be shared through the WVHIN's HIE you do not need to take action.

If you do not wish to participate you must Opt-Out. Opting-out means that doctors and other health care providers **will not** be able to access your health record through the WVHIN's HIE. You have several options for opting out of the WVHIN's Health Information Exchange. You may visit the WVHIN website at www.wvhin.org or ask your health care provider for a Request to Opt-Out form.

EVEN IF YOU CHOOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE (OPT-OUT):

The WVHIN will keep your personal information (name, address, birth date, etc.) on file in its Master Patient Index to permanently record your decision to opt-out.

Your doctor or health care provider will still be able to use the WVHIN's HIE to report and/or view…

- communicable diseases
- immunization data
- quality reports
- other required public health information to state and federal agencies.
- dispensed controlled substances

It is important to understand that choosing to opt-out of the WVHIN's HIE **does not** mean your health information cannot be shared electronically. Health care providers may use other electronic methods such as secure email or electronic lab results delivery to share patient information. Read your health care provider's notice of privacy practices for more information.

IF I HAVE CHOSEN TO OPT-OUT CAN I CHANGE MY MIND?

If you have previously submitted a Request to Opt-Out, you can change your mind. Please contact the WVHIN about reversing your Request to Opt-Out.

Please talk to your health care provider if you have questions about the WVHIN, or visit our website at www.wvhin.org.