



April 26, 2021

Celebrating 229 Years

1792 - 2021

HCMA - Leading the Change



Connecticut on the Verge of Launching a Statewide System to Electronically Share Patient Health Information

It has been a long time in coming but it looks like it is finally here - a statewide health information exchange that will share clinical information across all health care settings; support care coordination; reduce duplicative tests and errors; support public health reporting; research and population health analytics; provide patients with access to health information; plus more.

Health Information Alliance, doing business as Connie (Connecticut information exchange), is a neutral, nonprofit, nongovernmental entity established to develop and operate the health information exchange. The technology for Connie, developed by [UConn Analytics](#) and [CRISP](#) is complete, but data cannot be shared within the system until agreements are signed between Connie and the state's physicians and other health care providers.

According to Jenn Searls, the executive director of Connie, more than 25 small to medium healthcare practices have already signed on to the exchange, including ProHealth and the Connecticut State Medical Society's [CTHealthLink](#). The goal is to have 75 percent of the eligible medical groups, hospitals and labs exchanging data by the end of the year. Connie has been testing data exchange with Yale New Haven Health System - an important step towards building a functional exchange. The other major hospital healthcare system to sign with Connie is Hartford Healthcare.

Physicians should be aware that Connecticut has a strong policy lever to assure that doctors and other providers participate in Connie. [State law](#) requires hospitals and clinical laboratories connect to the statewide system within one year of it becoming operational. Healthcare providers, including physicians, who have electronic health records, will have to connect within two years. Only that information for which patients give their consent will be shared through Connie.

The success of Connie will depend on its ability to demonstrate value; and that will require it not only have robust participation with many providers, but offer new capabilities to the users. Towards that end, Connie will strive to provide physicians with a full view of those provider's records who have treated a patient and also the potential to provide summarized data.

Another important consideration for physicians is the cost hurdle to connect to Connie. The state has secured limited federal funding to help offset the costs for physicians to connect their EHR to Connie.

Note - the money is only available through September 30, 2021!

Join one of the [virtual information sessions](#) that will be held in late April and early May to learn more about Connie.