

Henry Ford Health System

Based in Detroit, Henry Ford is an integrated regional health system with six nationally ranked specialties and more than 2,000 beds at six hospitals. Henry Ford professionals use eHealth Connect® Record Retrieval Service to see complete clinical records on referred patients in two days—a process that used to take two weeks.

When a patient is referred to the Henry Ford Transplant Institute—Detroit's only multi-organ transplant center—time is of the essence. Medical teams need complete, accurate clinical histories to evaluate each patient and prepare for transplant. The sooner this happens, the better, because the health of people waiting for a transplant can often deteriorate rapidly. The less time it takes to review and prepare for transplant, the more likely it is that they will be ready when a suitable organ is found.

To obtain patient records quickly in a complete, consistent format, Henry Ford Transplant Institute relies on eHealth Connect.



Medical staff at Henry Ford Health System receive complete clinical records on most referred patients in two days using eHealth Connect® Record Retrieval Service.

From two weeks to two days

Nearly all transplant patients—and a large number of patients in other specialties—are referred from outside the Henry Ford network.

Before eHealth Technologies™ service, it usually took nurses and intake coordinators two weeks or more to collect the needed patient medical records from multiple external sites. The process sometimes resulted in delayed or canceled appointments, or physicians not able to see the historical records they need for a patient's first appointment.

Today, eHealth Technologies retrieves, organizes and delivers all the historical records Henry Ford physicians need to begin treating referred patients—including diagnostic images—routinely within 48 hours. The records are delivered directly into the hospital's electronic medical record (EMR) system and their web-based medical imaging system (PACS), allowing doctors and other professionals across the system to begin using them immediately.

How it works

Once a patient is referred, a nurse or other staff member submits an online request for specific patient information such as previous radiology reports and images, pathology, test results or other clinical data. Operating under a HIPAA business associate agreement, health-information specialists at eHealth Technologies then contact the different doctors and facilities that have the requested information for that patient, digitizing paper documents and X-ray film if needed.

C A S E S T U D Y

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The records are compiled in a digital format and are sent directly into Henry Ford's EMR and PACS, but eHealth Technologies can also make these records available utilizing their own secure Internet based viewing tools, for both documents and diagnostic-quality images.

“eHealth Connect has dramatically improved physician and staff satisfaction.”

Transplant Administrator, Henry Ford Health System

“eHealth Connect has dramatically improved physician and staff satisfaction with the record retrieval process,” said a transplant administrator at Henry Ford Health System. “More important, we're able to offer our patients more immediate care, with complete medical histories at our fingertips.”

Faster care for cancer patients

The Josephine Ford Cancer Center, part of the Henry Ford system, specializes in medical and radiation oncology for nearly 20 types of cancers. More cancer patients are treated at Henry Ford than any other hospital in Michigan, and more than 25 percent of those patients come from outside of the Henry Ford Hospital and Health network. eHealth Connect has helped to speed Henry Ford's oncology review and treatment process.

Every week, the oncology department convenes multidisciplinary “cancer conferences,” where specialists from across the system review individual cases and agree on treatment plans. Conference rooms at Henry Ford Health System are equipped for virtual meetings, where professionals at different locations view diagnostic images simultaneously on video displays.

Practice administrator for the Josephine Ford Cancer Center, said, “Using eHealth Connect has resulted in a more efficient clinical workflow for the center which is especially important for cancer patients.”

“Most people diagnosed with cancer want to begin their treatment as soon as possible,” the practice administrator stated. “With eHealth Connect, we have virtually eliminated delays caused by gathering essential records, so teams from multiple specialties can collaborate more quickly on a treatment plan. The service helps to foster stronger bonds between our patients and physicians.”

Center of Excellence care with a personal touch

Staff agreed that demonstrating concern for patients is a key benefit of eHealth Connect. “We can quantify many of the improvements, such as scheduling appointments sooner, using staff time more efficiently and repeating fewer tests,” they said. “But there is also an intangible benefit for referred patients, especially those who may be concerned about the level of individual attention a large institution can provide. When patients walk in for a first appointment and find that the doctor has already reviewed their complete file, the personal relationship is off to a good start.”