



# Advancing Healthcare through Direct Secure Messaging

## Direct is a Form of Secure Messaging

eHealthCT Direct is an easy-to-use, fast and secure electronic communication service for clinical providers and others who regularly transmit and/or receive protected health information (PHI). Direct looks and operates like email, but with security features such as point-to-point encryption required for PHI. Direct is not a brand name or a company, Direct is a transmission standard developed by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC).

## Direct Messaging is Easy!

- All you need to use eHealthCT Direct is an internet connection, a web browser and a communication partner with a Direct address to securely exchange patient health information.
- You can exchange clinical information securely with or without an Electronic Health Record (EHR) system.

## Achieve Stage 2 Meaningful Use Connectivity

Stage 2 Meaningful Use prescribes Direct as the primary transport mechanism for clinical information sharing. Direct provides the fastest and easiest way to maximize incentive criteria achievement.

## Fast, Efficient Coordination of Care

Direct connects all participants in a patient's journey (within and beyond organizational boundaries) reducing administration workload, avoiding lost documents, reducing repeat tests and reducing wait times. Patient information is handled quickly, efficiently and with the highest regard for privacy.



## Help Drive Referrals to Your Organization

Direct instantly supercharges referrals networks by providing a secure channel for primary care providers to refer patients to your organization. Direct integrates seamlessly with providers of all technology capabilities, from those with full EMR solutions, to those with only email communication.

## Information Clarity

eHealthCT Direct ensures relevant, correct information reaches the right locations quickly, accurately and securely. It reduces admin staff reliance and eliminates illegibility issues caused by fax and handwriting quality.

## Platform for Growth

Direct is the simplest option for beginning the journey to a rich health information exchange in convenient, proven steps.

## Secure, HIPAA Compliant Communications

Direct provides you with a method for communicating with your colleagues electronically using a HIPAA-compliant channel. With a fax machine or courier service there is always a concern that protected health information (PHI) could be viewed by someone other than the intended recipient. Direct emails are encrypted and can only be opened by the trusted recipient.

## Direct Secure Messaging FAQ

### What is Direct?

Direct is a secure, point-to-point messaging service that allows registered providers and designees to send structured or unstructured information such as office notes, referrals and lab reports to each other. The standards and specifications for Direct were developed through The Direct Project within the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT. eHealthCT Direct is powered by MaxMD, a member of DirectTrust.org.

### What are the benefits of Direct?

- Direct empowers providers to deliver better care with increased efficiency and lower costs.
- Using Direct, all connected parties can securely send vital information more readily and can deliver the right care at the right time.
- Direct improves the transition of care from one provider to another. Nearly 60% of patients who receive follow-up care after acute or urgent treatment fail to get documentation to primary care physicians.
- Achieve and qualify for Meaningful Use incentives.

### How does Direct benefit the healthcare system as a whole?

Direct reduces the burden on healthcare administration by taking the fax machine out of the enterprise. About 10,000 pages of medical records are faxed each day in a medium-sized hospital, and an estimated 20% don't get to their destination.

### What is the cost for Direct?

eHealthCT has a limited amount of vouchers for one year of free Direct Service. After that time, a low monthly fee may be applied and invoiced annually.

### How long does the subscription process take?

It only takes about 10 minutes to complete the Direct subscription form online. Once you have completed the form, it will take approximately 7 – 10 days to finalize your account information. You will receive email confirmation upon the creation of your account.

### What information is needed for the subscription process?

The Authorized Representative for each organization will need to complete a Direct Secure Messaging subscription form online.

### Do I need to buy any special equipment to use Direct?

All you need to use Direct is an internet connection and a computer, tablet or smart phone to begin to securely exchange patient information electronically with other health care organizations, providers and professionals.

### Do I need to download any special software?

No, you do not need to download any software. You will log into a secure web portal to access your Direct account.

### How does the security of Direct work?

Direct works the same way as “regular” email — users have their own inboxes, can send and receive secure messages, and can manage their own contacts, in addition to using the global address book. The “secure” part of the solution means that all messages and attachments are encrypted such that only the intended recipient(s) can decrypt and read messages and attachments.

### Can I use Direct to send “regular” email?

Your Direct account can only be used to send secure messages to other users with Direct addresses. You can integrate your Direct account into your current email system.

### Why should I use Direct instead of regular e-mail?

Direct provides you with a method for communicating with your colleagues electronically using a HIPAA-compliant channel. Direct is being established as the standard for nationwide secure messaging. States, federal agencies and private health care organizations are all working toward making Direct the common way to communicate securely throughout the country.

### Who do I contact if I need help with Direct?

If you have any questions about Direct, please send an email to [info@ehealthconnecticut.org](mailto:info@ehealthconnecticut.org)

