



# Providing Patients in Ambulatory Care Settings with an Electronic Copy of their Health Information

## FACT SHEET

### Provided By:

The National Learning Consortium (NLC)

### Developed By:

Health Information Technology Research Center (HITRC)

*The material in this document was developed by Regional Extension Center staff in the performance of technical support and EHR implementation. The information in this document is not intended to serve as legal advice nor should it substitute for legal counsel. Users are encouraged to seek additional detailed technical guidance to supplement the information contained within. The REC staff developed these materials based on the technology and law that were in place at the time this document was developed. Therefore, advances in technology and/or changes to the law subsequent to that date may not have been incorporated into this material.*

## NATIONAL LEARNING CONSORTIUM

The National Learning Consortium (NLC) is a virtual and evolving body of knowledge and tools designed to support healthcare providers and health IT professionals working towards the implementation, adoption and meaningful use of certified EHR systems.

The NLC represents the collective EHR implementation experiences and knowledge gained directly from the field of ONC's outreach programs ([REC](#), [Beacon](#), [State HIE](#)) and through the [Health Information Technology Research Center \(HITRC\)](#) Communities of Practice (CoPs).

The following resource is an example of a tool used in the field today that is recommended by “boots-on-the-ground” professionals for use by others who have made the commitment to implement or upgrade to certified EHR systems.

# Providing Patients in Ambulatory Care Settings with an Electronic Copy of their Health Information

---

One of the core meaningful use requirements for patient and family engagement is to provide patients with an electronic copy of their health information. This information must be created and transmitted electronically via the electronic health record (EHR) system.

To meet this requirement, when a patient requests it, eligible healthcare providers must deliver an electronic copy of all health information that is available from the patient's EHR. At minimum, this information includes:

- Diagnostic test results
- Problem list
- Medication lists
- Medication allergies

The requirement excludes certain information that the provider may deem to be damaging to the well-being of the patient and information that is only available on paper and is not in the EHR.

*“Timely patient access to the electronic medical record is the foundation stone to creating patient centered care and better health outcomes. Access empowers patients in their decision making, promotes informed choice and supports mental health; for there is no worse emotion than feeling uninformed and ignored while navigating the healthcare system”.*

*– Regina Holliday, medical advocate*

---

## MEETING THIS MEANINGFUL USE REQUIREMENT

To fulfill this requirement, more than half of patients requesting information must receive an electronic copy within 3 business days. The health information itself should be readable by patients. For example, the diagnosis should be listed as acute conjunctivitis rather than the ICD-9 code 372.00.

## DELIVERY OPTIONS

If you are using a patient portal to provide patients with access to this information, you are meeting the meaningful use requirement. If you use e-mail to provide this information, make sure you are using a secure e-mail system. You may also provide this information in an alternative format, such as a USB flash drive or CD.