



→ The CONNECT Open Source Solution A Gateway to the Nationwide Health Information Network

CONNECT is an open source software solution that enables health information exchange – both locally and at the national level. CONNECT employs Nationwide Health Information Network standards and services to ensure that health information exchanges are compatible with other exchanges throughout the country.

CONNECT was developed by federal agencies to support their health-related missions. It is now available as an open source solution to any organization seeking to establish health information exchanges using nationally-recognized interoperability standards.

By promoting the adoption of interoperable health IT systems, the nation can achieve the goal of providing all citizens with electronic health records. Using the Nationwide Health Information Network infrastructure, CONNECT enables health professionals to request, send and receive medical records so critical information can follow patients as they navigate through the health care system. The software places relevant patient medical data at the doctor's fingertips. It enhances security, promotes public health, and empowers patients to be more active and involved in their own care decisions.

Nationwide Collaboration in Support of Citizens

CONNECT is a Federal Health Architecture (FHA) project that began in 2007 to share health-related data among federal agencies and their partners. FHA is a coalition of federal agencies that advance health IT interoperability within federal agencies and outward with state, tribal, local and private sector organizations.

Rarely, do federal agencies come together to build a common system that everyone can utilize. However, CONNECT was built collaboratively by more than 20 federal agencies – each sharing the common goal of improving health information exchanges by making them more reliable and secure. Joint development eliminated duplicate, disjointed efforts and dramatically reduced costs for the federal government.

After developing CONNECT in less than a year, federal agencies released CONNECT as an open source software for use throughout the industry. Today, the CONNECT open source community is comprised of more than 2,000 organizations – including federal agencies, states, healthcare providers, insurers, health IT vendors – all working together to improve the CONNECT solution. The solution has received many awards for innovation, including the *Wall Street Journal's* Technology Innovation Award for Healthcare in September 2010.

To learn more about the CONNECT solution and community, visit <http://www.connectopensource.org>.



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The Solution

Three primary components make up the CONNECT solution:

- The **Core Services Gateway** can locate patients at other organizations, request and receive documents associated with the patient, and record these transactions for subsequent auditing by patients and others. Other features include mechanisms for authenticating network participants, formulating and evaluating authorizations for the release of medical information, and honoring consumer preferences for sharing their information. The Nationwide Health Information Network Interface specifications are implemented within this component.
- The **Enterprise Service Components** provide default implementations of many critical enterprise components required to support electronic health information exchange, including a Master Patient Index (MPI), XDS.b Document Registry and Repository, Authorization Policy Engine, Consumer Preferences Manager, HIPAA-compliant Audit Log and others.
- The **Universal Client Framework** is a set of applications that can be adapted to quickly create an edge system, and be used as a reference system, and/or can be used as a test and demonstration system for the gateway solution. This makes it possible to innovate on top of the existing CONNECT platform.

CONNECT Milestones

2007	OCT	Federal agencies vote to participate in the Nationwide Health Information Network and begin developing CONNECT
2008	MAR	The Federal Health Architecture (FHA) awards contract to begin CONNECT development
	JUN	FHA releases CONNECT v0.5 to the Social Security Administration (SSA) to support test event
	AUG	FHA and Federal Partners use CONNECT to test Nationwide Health Information Network specifications along with other Nationwide Health Information Network trial grantees and awardees
	SEP	Department of Defense (DoD), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and SSA participate Nationwide Health Information Network demonstration at AHIC public meeting
	NOV	FHA and Federal Partners participate in test event to test additional Nationwide Health Information Network services
	DEC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), DoD, Indian Health Service (IHS), National Cancer Institute (NCI), SSA and VA participate in demonstrations at ONC Nationwide Health Information Network Forum
2009	FEB	SSA goes into limited production on the Nationwide Health Information Network using CONNECT v1.0 exchanging data with MedVirginia
	APR	DoD, VA, IHS, CDC, SSA, NCI and the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) participate in HIMSS 2009 demonstrations. FHA releases the source code (v2.0) as open source and begins developing the open source community
	JUN	FHA hosts the first CONNECT Annual Training Seminar; FHA releases CONNECT v2.1; Orange County and Redwood MedNet in California deploy CONNECT
	JUL	MedVirginia moves into limited production with CONNECT, exchanging data with SSA
	AUG	FHA hosts first CONNECT Code-A-Thon in Washington D.C.
	SEP	CDC, DoD, IHS, Kaiser Permanente, MedVirginia, NCHICA, NCI, NDMS, SSA and VA demonstrate CONNECT on Capitol Hill; FHA releases CONNECT v2.2; Regenstrief moves into production using CONNECT
	NOV	FHA hosts CONNECT Code-A-Thon in Portland, OR
	DEC	VA goes into limited production on the Nationwide Health Information Network using CONNECT exchanging data with Kaiser Permanente
	2010	JAN
FEB		Thayer County Health Services and Health Bridge go into production using CONNECT
MAR		41 organizations participated in demonstrations at HIMSS 2010; FHA releases CONNECT v2.4
APR		FHA hosted CONNECT Code-A-Thon in Miami, FL
JUN		FHA releases CONNECT v3.0
SEP		FHA releases CONNECT v3.1; FHA hosts CONNECT Code-A-Thon at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN
2011	FEB	FHA participates in HIMSS 2011 to highlight use of CONNECT nationwide



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