

# **Sending Electronic Syndromic Surveillance Data to a Public Health Agency**

## **HIE Scenario, Workflow and Specifications**

### **Provided By:**

The National Learning Consortium (NLC)

### **Developed By:**

Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC)  
Office of Science and Technology (OST)

*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.*

## 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.

## DESCRIPTION & INSTRUCTIONS

This resource is intended to aid providers and health IT implementers in understanding health information exchange (HIE) solutions related to the Meaningful Use Menu Measure 10 – Syndromic Surveillance Data Submission.

This scenario provides a practical example of how the contents of the Nationwide Health Information Network (NwHIN) portfolio can be used to achieve meaningful electronic exchange of health information. This is part of a series of HIE scenarios intended to provide a straightforward view into the standards, services and policies behind HIE solutions.

Each document in the HIE scenarios series describes an everyday situation where patient care is improved through information exchange between health care professionals.

The scenario is presented through a narrative description of events and a corresponding graphic, followed by a detailed description of the workflow steps involved. The resource concludes with an inventory of the key specifications and resources necessary to implement the information exchange described.

Other scenarios and their related specifications can be found on the S&I Framework Repository at: <http://www.siframework.org/>. Additional questions may be sent via email to: [info@siframework.org](mailto:info@siframework.org).

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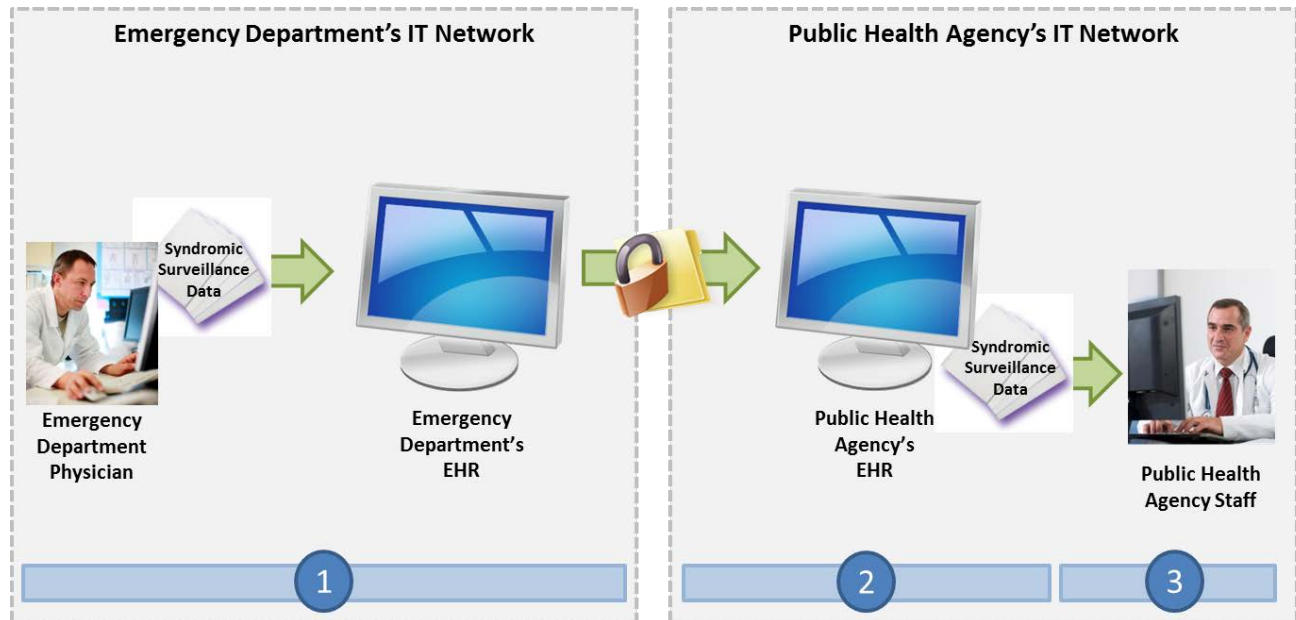
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# 1 Sending Electronic Syndromic Surveillance Data to a Public Health Agency

An emergency department provider sends electronic syndromic surveillance data to a public health agency:



A patient is seen at his local emergency department and is diagnosed with the influenza virus (flu) by a provider. In order to monitor the volume of patients in certain areas who have been diagnosed with the flu as well as to track the projected path of the spread of the virus, the emergency department provider enters the patient's symptoms into the EHR and a message is automatically sent to local, state, and national public health agencies for monitoring.

**Meaningful Use Stage 2 Objectives related to syndromic surveillance:** Capability to submit electronic syndromic surveillance data to public health agencies except where prohibited, and in accordance with applicable law and practice. (*Meaningful Use Menu Set for EPs*)

## 1.1 COMMON WORKFLOW STEPS FOR THIS SCENARIO

1. After diagnosing a patient with the flu, the emergency department physician enters the patient's symptoms and final diagnosis into an EHR. Upon recognizing the flu diagnosis, the EHR automatically sends a message detailing the patient's symptoms to a state health agency.
2. The state health agency to which the emergency department sends the message employs the use of Public Health Information Network (PHIN) Messaging. In order to ensure interoperability with the state agency, the emergency department's EHR sends the message in accordance with the HL7 2.5.1 Content Structure Specification and the Public Health Information Network (PHIN) Messaging Guide for Syndromic Surveillance: Emergency Department and Urgent Care Data Version 1.0.
3. Upon receipt of the syndromic surveillance message, the state health agency's staff may now use this data to track epidemic statistics.

## 1.2 NWHIN 1.0 SPECIFICATIONS AND RESOURCES RECOMMENDED FOR THIS SCENARIO

**Exhibit 1 Specifications and Resources**

Specifications	Resources
<p><b>Content Structure</b>            Guidance that specifies how to structure health information to ensure proper exchange</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">PHIN Messaging Guide for Syndromic Surveillance: HL7 Version 2.5.1</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">HL7 2.5.1</a></li> </ul>