Good Information Sharing Practices

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The Good Information Sharing Practices outlined in this document are a practical list of proactive actions health IT developers can undertake to demonstrate their strong support for access, use, and exchange of health information and compliance with information blocking regulations. The list was generated in 2021-2023 by the Electronic Health Record (EHR) Association's Information Blocking Compliance Task Force based on its members' expertise as health IT developers, and the Association welcomed and incorporated feedback from other stakeholders.

Our goal is that our members and other health IT developers will reference these Practices to inspire further work to promote interoperability and to demonstrate their strong commitment to information sharing.

Health IT Developer Good Information Sharing Practices

A. Design systems that make the right data available to appropriate stakeholders
   i.   For example, providing patient portals or facilitating app access via standard APIs.

B. Assist users with interoperability features:
   i.   Promote/encourage use of interoperability features.
   ii. Provide a library of what interoperability elements are available and roadmaps on future development and enhancements related to interoperability.
   iii. Make available information on the intended use and purpose of an interoperability feature, including what scope of electronic health information (EHI) it enables to be made available for access, exchange, or use.
   iv. Outline best practices/workflows for users as it relates to making EHI available through certain manners.
   v.   Collaborate with users (EHR and developer users) and incorporate their feedback into ongoing system design improvements.
   vi. Assist users with knowing how to use the software to meet their pertinent regulatory requirements.

C. Support and invest in health IT standards, for example, by doing anything that is applicable of the following:
   i.   Serve as members of standards bodies.
   ii. Volunteer with standards groups (SDOs) to be involved in prioritization.
   iii. Identify gaps in standards currently serving as roadblocks and work to resolve and provide feedback on implementation and opportunities for refinement.
   iv. Incorporate mature and pertinent standards into the software and pursue certification through ONC's program where applicable.
   v.   Participate in connect-a-thons or other real-world demonstrations.

D. Publish specifications/guidance for integration/interoperability with the systems they develop:
   i.   Facilitate information sharing about how to interoperate with users of your system, for example, by publishing API endpoints or Direct addresses.

E. Support clients in participation in health information exchange frameworks and networks
   i.   Support participation in national health information exchange frameworks and networks (TEF, Carequality, Commonwell, etc.).
   ii. Support exchange for clinical care and patient access purposes.
   iii. Support local or specialty HIEs specific to their client base.
   iv. In collaboration with clients' exchange partners, work to expand exchange to additional use cases beyond treatment / clinical care, such as public health.

F. Have an information sharing policy
   i.   Internal policies and/or procedures for responding to interoperability or information sharing requests, including how to determine if the request has the necessary authorizations and approvals.
   ii. Include expected turnaround times to respond to requests for EHI and/or requests for licensing of interoperability elements.
   iii. May vary for different products/functionalities.
   iv. Internal policies and procedures outlining when exceptions (such as Fees and Licensing) may apply and compliance efforts to adhere to them.
   v.   Mechanisms to audit against standing policies and procedures to make sure they are followed.