



Fact Sheet to Accompany Press Release “HealthInfoNet, The Rhode Island Quality Institute, and VITL Announce New England Region Health Information Exchange (HIE) Collaboration”

June 21, 2022 – VITL, HealthInfoNet, and The Rhode Island Quality Institute, are announcing a collaboration aimed at advancing interstate interoperability to improve population health and patient care in and across each of the New England communities they serve.

The full press release including contact information is available on the VITL website at vitl.net. Questions can be directed to Maurine Gilbert, Director of Client Engagement, at mgilbert@vitl.net.

The following is a fact sheet with more information about how this collaboration will benefit Vermonters, their clinicians, and Vermont’s health care system.

What is the purpose of this collaboration?

VITL is partnering with HealthInfoNet and the Rhode Island Institute for Quality to advance regional health data interoperability, develop new products and services together to meet client needs, and improve operational efficiency.

How will Vermont patients benefit from this partnership?

Patients experience the best informed, most coordinated care when their full health history is available to their clinicians. This collaboration will support the development of more complete health records for Vermonters.

How will Vermont clinicians benefit from this partnership?

The new collaboration aims to give clinicians a more comprehensive view of their patients’ health history, including the care patients receive at regional specialty centers. This will promote better informed, more effective care. More complete records can support less duplication of tests and procedures, which is important as organizations that provide health care commit to value based care and an affordable, sustainable health care system.

How will public health and health care reform initiatives in Vermont benefit from this partnership?

This collaboration aims to provide more robust data about the health of Vermonters to the Vermont Department of Health and Vermont health reform initiatives. This will promote better understanding the health of the populations they work on behalf of, including groups of people who have been historically marginalized and/or live in the most rural parts of our region.

How is this collaboration structured?

This is a collaboration of independent nonprofit organizations. VITL will remain focused on the needs of Vermonters, this collaboration will help VITL better serve Vermonters.

What do we mean by “interoperability”?

People’s lives and health care journeys don’t stop when they leave the doctor’s office or travel between states, and neither should health data. Interoperability means the ability to share data between patients’ authorized health care providers even when those providers are working at different organizations, using different technologies, or in different states. Interoperability requires overcoming differences in how data is recorded and stored to enable appropriate, secure sharing of meaningful patient information that supports informed health care.

How will this collaboration advance interoperability and data sharing?

Through this collaboration, VITL, HealthInfoNet, and The Rhode Island Institute for Quality will explore ways to make patients’ data available to their clinicians regardless of where in the region they receive primary or specialty care. One of the objectives is incorporating data from important new sources, such as regional specialty centers, into Vermonters’ health records.

How will this collaboration support new health data services?

Together, VITL, HealthInfoNet, and The Rhode Island Institute for Quality will learn from each other’s expertise and leverage each other’s infrastructure to expand the health data services available in each state. VITL expects to introduce new services when they meet real needs of Vermont patients, clinicians, care coordinators, our public health department, and health reform initiatives.

How will this collaboration improve operational efficiency?

Vermont is a small state and VITL is a lean health information exchange. Through this collaboration we will explore opportunities for shared operations or joint purchasing that will help us maximize efficiency.

Where can I learn more about VITL’s work and about health information exchange?

More information about VITL is available at vitl.net. VITL’s most [recent annual report](#) offers a comprehensive overview of our services, strategic framework, and recent projects. More information about health information exchange and its benefits can be found at the [website of The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology](#) (ONC).