



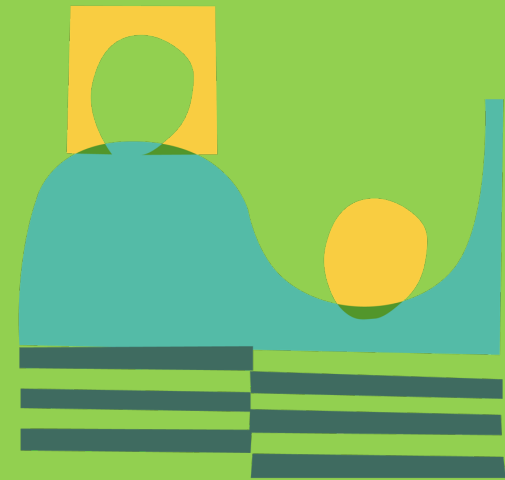
About VITL and the Vermont Health Information Exchange

February 26, 2025

VITL



About VITL and Our Work





About VITL

VITL is a Vermont-based 501(c) (3) nonprofit that shares health information responsibly to help providers care for their patients.

18 V.S.A. § 9352 designates VITL as the operator of the Vermont Health Information Exchange – a health data sharing network that is creating one health record for every Vermonter.

VITL's mission is to securely aggregate, standardize, and share the data needed to improve the effectiveness of health care for Vermonters



What is Health Information Exchange?

- According to the Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy:

Health information exchange (HIE) encompasses two related concepts:

- *Verb*: The appropriate and confidential electronic exchange of clinical information among authorized organizations
- *Noun*: An organization with agreed-upon operational and business rules that provides services to enable the electronic and secure sharing of health-related information

Electronic exchange of clinical information allows doctors, nurses, pharmacists, other health care providers, and patients to access and securely share a patient's vital medical information electronically—improving the speed, quality, safety, coordination, and cost of patient care.

www.healthit.gov

About VITL

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Health Data Interoperability

VITL enables the sharing of health data across systems

- VITL provides the ability to collect health information from disparate systems and sources and make it meaningful and usable for all stakeholders
- VITL collects, matches, and standardizes patient data in real time from health care providers caring for Vermonters to create one longitudinal record for each person in the Vermont Health Information Exchange





VITL is a Data Sharing Hub

Connecting to VITL reduces data sharing burden for provider organizations

- For health care organizations, connecting to VITL replaces the need to build many point-to-point connections
- VITL efficiently delivers their health data to the places it needs to go
 - For example – results delivery to other providers, data to the Vermont Department of Health, the Blueprint for Health, Bi-State Primary Care Association, and more
- The result is reduced provider and organization burden and more data available to support”
 - Patient care
 - Care management
 - Quality improvement
 - Health care reform
 - Public health activities
 - Population health initiatives



VITL Participants

241 total organizations contribute and/or access data through VITL

	Contribute Data	Access Data
Hospitals (including all Vermont hospitals and two border hospitals, along with their inpatient and ambulatory services, emergency departments, and owned specialty and primary care practices)	15	16
Vermont Federally Qualified Health Centers	11	10
Independent Specialty and Primary Care Practices	49	91
Home Health Agencies	4	5
Nursing Homes and Long-term Care Facilities	0	4
Pharmacy Chains and Independent Pharmacies	11	1
Laboratories (State and Commercial)	15	0
Departments of the State of Vermont	2	3
Designated Mental Health Agencies and Specialized Services Agencies	0	12
Emergency Medical Services Agencies	0	50
Commercial Payer	0	1



VITL Data

Types of data VITL collects and shares

Health information exchange transmits information originally collected in providers' electronic health records (EHRs) using specific types of messages and data feeds, defined by international standards like Health Level Seven (HL7) and Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR). VITL ingests and shares the following data types:

- Admission, discharge, and transfer messages (ADT) notifications
- Patient record summaries called Continuity of Care Documents (CCDs)
- Laboratory and pathology test results
- Radiology reports
Radiologists' readings of diagnostic imaging, not the images themselves
- Clinical notes and transcriptions
- Home health monitoring data
- Immunization records



VITL Data Access Services

Secure access to comprehensive health records, when and where data is needed

The VITLAccess clinical web portal offers access to one consolidated health record. It is available to providers and staff at health care organizations, public and private payers, ACOs, emergency medical services, and public health authorities. ([click for a video about use by EMS agencies](#))

Delivery of test results, imaging reports, and notes into electronic health records (EHRs), for greater efficiency compared to fax- and phone-based workflows.

Delivery of clinical summary documents into EHRs, enables health care organizations to pull clinical record summaries from VITL data contributors, called Continuity of Care Documents, into their EHRs.

In-EHR Immunization Registry Query, delivers comprehensive immunization histories from the Vermont Department of Health's Immunization Registry directly into the patient record along with a forecast of patient immunization recommendations. ([click for a case study about registry query](#))

Event notification, through a partner who delivers real-time data about patient care provided in Vermont's emergency departments and hospitals, helping the whole care team coordinate services and supports.

Custom reporting, which provides data about patient and population health.



VITL Data Delivery Services

VITL is a hub for efficient data sharing

VITL enables our data contributors to send data once – to the Vermont Health Information Exchange. The data that VITL delivers informs care delivery and coordination, public health, and population health efforts.

In 2024, VITL delivered data, on behalf of data contributors, to:

- Clinicians and staff at organizations that provide patient care
- Public and private payers
- The Vermont Department of Health
- Bi-State Primary Care Association
- The Vermont Blueprint for Health
- The Vermont Chronic Care Initiative



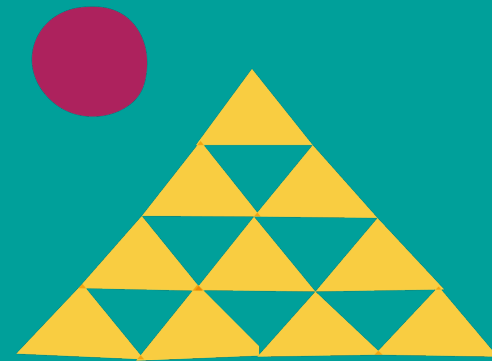
VITL by the Numbers

241 health care organizations contribute and/or access data

- In 2024, VITL
 - Received 60.5 million messages
 - Delivered over 1.3 million test results and reports directly into providers' EHRs
 - Delivered 23,296 reportable laboratory results to VDH
 - Shared 1,066,890 immunization records with VDH
 - Enabled access to 253,378 immunization histories from EHRs
- 2,751 users at 183 organizations have access to VITL's provider portal
 - There were 22,769 chart accesses in January
 - Chart accesses increased 53% since December 2023



How Data is Shared





How Vermonters' Data is Shared

- Data sharing is governed by the Services Agreements between VITL and organizations that contribute and use data, by state and federal law including HIPAA, by VITL policies, and Appendix A of the State's HIE Strategic Plan.
- An individual Vermonter's data is available to authorized users.
- Currently, 98.9% of Vermonters are sharing their data.





Data Security and Privacy

The security and confidentiality of patient health records in the Vermont Health Information Exchange has always been a core focus of VITL's work

- A privacy officer and a security officer oversee policy development and implementation and deliver education for all VITL staff. Our security policies align with National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) security and privacy controls, which addresses incident response, identity and authentication, access control, audit and logging, configuration management, contingency planning, and supply chain risk management.
- Access to Vermont Health Information Exchange data is logged and is audited regularly, in compliance with federal and state laws and VITL policies. Patients can also request an audit of access of their data.
- VITL engages in thorough security testing, including an annual third-party evaluation of our adherence to rigorous security standards to identify improvement opportunities and priorities. VITL will continue to regularly review and update our security tools and policies to ensure alignment with best practices and mitigate the ever-changing threat landscape. Our goal is to maintain effective, sustainable protections across all data managed by VITL.





Patient Education

Ongoing patient education through provider partnerships and public outreach

- VITL is rare among HIEs in its commitment to direct engagement with patients (Vermonters)
- Transparency builds trust - Public education has become a core part of our service to Vermonters
- Education campaigns focus on how data is shared, why it matters, and every Vermonter's options – including access to individual records
- More information for individuals is available at vitl.net/sharing



Partnering with Public Health



Partnership: Public Health

Growing partnership delivers data in support of many public health uses

- During COVID, HIEs demonstrated real value in support of public health
 - Connected with new testing sites for testing data
 - Collected and delivering immunization records
 - Delivered daily reporting of hospitalizations, resource usage
 - Supported case investigations and contact tracing
- VITL's partnership with the Department of Health continues to grow
 - A connection to the Vermont Immunization Registry enables providers to pull immunization history and forecasts directly into their EHRs
 - Expanded lab reporting for reportable diseases
 - Expanded use of portal by public health
 - Strategic plan in place for the coming years – currently integrating birth records and immunization records
 - Exploring opportunities to access and use deidentified and aggregate data to inform public health work
 - Delivering data to the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) public health nutrition program ([click for a case study to learn more](#))



Highlighting Projects on the Horizon



Our work is guided by the State's HIE Strategic Plan and VITL's Strategic Framework

VT HIE Strategic Plan Goals

1. Create One Health Record for Every Person
2. Better Health Outcomes
3. Improve Health Care Operations
4. Use Data to Enable Investment and Policy Decisions

VITL Strategic Directions

1. Focus on our Customers
2. Tell Our Story
3. Be the Go-To Partner for Exchanging Vermont's Health Information
4. Build a Learning Organization
5. Ensure Sustainability





Social Drivers of Health

At the ground floor of a standardized statewide approach to SDOH data sharing

- Multi-stakeholder group including health care, health delivery reform, and accountable care organization aligning on statewide use of the Accountable Health Communities Health Related Social Needs screening tool, State of Vermont simultaneously developing an SDOH data roadmap
- Opportunity to co-design an end-to-end system for data collection, sharing, and use
- Challenging each other to plan for equity, build-in approaches that enable all provider organizations to collect and share SDOH data





Upcoming work we're excited about

Continuing to build one health record for every Vermonter and make health data available to improve outcomes, support health care operations, and guide investment and policy decisions

- Integrate new data types into the Vermont Health Information Exchange, including more substance use disorder data and SDOH data
- Continue work to leverage new technologies to deliver the health data that providers need when and where they need it – often directly in EHRs
- Evaluate opportunities to participate in federal interoperability initiatives while also protecting the privacy of sensitive data that is protected under Vermont law
- Work with Vermont's Agency of Human Services to support their development of a "Unified Health Data Space"





VITL