Imagine a patient gets into an accident while traveling outside of their home state. When they arrive at the hospital, they are unconscious and unable to describe their allergies or detail their medications. This scenario is not uncommon, but consider this even more common occurrence: A patient receives a diagnosis but can’t find information about cost of care, treatment opportunities, provider availability, or their own medical information. Ultimately, the patient is unable to make an informed decision about their own care.

The American healthcare landscape is shifting. Healthcare organizations across the U.S. are working to digitize health data to make it more shareable and actionable. The most recent changes include the release of two final rules related to the Office of the National Coordinator’s 21st Century Cures Act (Cures Act). Situations like the ones mentioned above can lead to misdiagnosis, improper treatment, and patient harm. Under an interoperable healthcare system where patients are empowered with access to their own health data, medical professionals would have the ability to search for patients using an electronic health record (EHR), resulting in better transitions of care and improved patient outcomes.

Are you ready to establish some interoperable practices at your organization, but you’re not sure how? Do you want to build a community of patients who are partners in care? We’ve built this guide to help you understand the history and importance of health IT interoperability, as well as to introduce a few changes you can make to bring interoperability into your practice and provide your patients with access to their data.

What is Health IT Interoperability?

Introduction

The Legislative Background of Interoperability

Barriers to Achieving Nationwide Health IT Interoperability

Interoperability Goals

How Can Formstack Help You Achieve Interoperability?

Formstack in Action

Empowered Patients Are Healthy Patients

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On average, a single hospital system uses 16 distinct EHR platforms, according to a 2017 report released by the Health Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Analytics. Among hospital providers with access to an electronic health record, 62% do not use or access data from outside of their organization’s EHR because that data isn’t available within their workflow.

However, patients typically need to receive care from a variety of clinics, independent practices, specialists, and hospitals. The combination of these interactions make up the entirety of a patient’s medical history, also known as the Continuum of Care. But when providers across this continuum do not (or cannot) share data between their EHRs, patient records are not updated or maintained. A known issue with our current healthcare system is a lack of integrated healthcare information technology (Health IT). Failing to provide medical professionals with access to all the data points they need to treat patients can be dangerous—especially among patients experiencing comorbid disorders. That’s why interoperability is such a crucial piece of our healthcare ecosystem.

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62% do not use or access data from outside of their organization’s EHR

It’s a Fact

In healthcare, interoperability is the ability for various health information technologies to exchange, interpret, and use data cohesively.

An interoperable health system would empower patients to fully understand and use their electronic health data, enable providers to deliver more efficient care, and promote healthcare innovation at all levels.
Executive order establishes the ONC

resources to meet the requirements set out by CMS, ONC, and other providers treating her. By successfully opening build a shared care plan for Lucy based on unfortunately, the in-network endocrinologist isn’t a Formstack user. But this doesn’t mean the end of the already be entered into your EHR. immediately sent to her by secure email and is automatically routed to the o time, Lucy is asked to complete a patient health (PCP) is available for an appointment at the requested need to start meeting requirements as soon as six months following the publication of the final rule. protecting patient privacy and worry that the timeline for implementation is too aggressive. Rural hospitals, information blocking. Ultimately, this could create a blacklist of violating facilities that providers will want to according to CMS Administrator Seema Verma, “The days of patients being kept in the dark are over. In Li several other challenges continue to bar health IT stakeholders from achieving true interoperability. Some of outdated or not standardized. For hospitals using di

Pro Tip

Formstack’s Workflows add-on automates the work you do every day. Track the progress of your daily workflows and identify where communication bottlenecks appear.

Formstack’s Conversion Kit feature lets you use form data to learn more about your patients, pinpoint problem areas in your strategy, and increase submissions.

Formstack offers dozens of completely customizable, mobile-friendly form templates to help you onboard patients, process prescriptions, and handle requests.

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