

Blue Plans: Health Information Technology



**BlueCross BlueShield
Association**

An Association of Independent
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans

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An Overview of Blue Plan Initiatives in Health IT

Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans Advance Health IT Nationwide

Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans across the country are leaders in advancing health information technology (IT), giving consumers and providers information to help them make better healthcare decisions. Plans are:

- Giving providers improved access to administrative information at the point of service – so that more time is available to see patients.
- Promoting interoperability by developing state-wide health information exchanges.
- Increasing consumers' power by giving them improved access to their medical information.
- Giving physicians a consolidated view of their patients' care by sharing electronic, payer-based clinical information.
- Helping providers adopt health IT by giving them access to electronic-prescribing (e-Rx) and electronic health records (EHRs).

Following are examples of how Blue Plans are advancing health IT.

Improving Information at the Point of Service

- ***Blue Cross and Blue Shield of South Carolina*** offers physicians a sophisticated swipe-card reader that within seconds sends back information on a patient's eligibility and how much it will pay the physician and how much the patient owes.
- ***Regence Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oregon*** offers providers a comprehensive on-line set of tools and resources, including clinical guidelines, member eligibility information, Web-based claims submission, pre-authorization and referrals.

Developing State-Wide Health Information Exchanges

- ***Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield*** has spearheaded the Advanced Health Information Network, an online system giving physicians and hospitals access to e-medical records and claims databases, while piloting low-cost wireless EHRs for small practices.
- ***Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts*** has provided \$50 million to fund the MA e-health Collaborative for 3 years. This pilot project will give EHRs – software, hardware, installation, training, support – to virtually all physicians in three Massachusetts communities.
- ***Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska*** is the main payer leading the NE Health Information Initiative, a statewide system that will serve virtually every Nebraskan by building on the existing telemedicine network.

Increasing the Power of Consumers

- *Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New York* offers members a secure, Internet-based personal health record (PHR) that is auto-populated with data from processed claims, including doctor visits, lab results, immunizations, hospital stays, reported diagnoses and prescriptions.
- *Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois* offers members a PHR and online, interactive solutions through the Personal Health Information Management Program. The program relies on a comprehensive claims database to facilitate case management and online consumer education.

Sharing Payer-Based Health Information with Providers

- *Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Tennessee* has launched Shared Health, which combines data from claims, lab tests, prescriptions filled, and immunizations to create a patient-centered community health record that allows multiple providers treating the same patient to view that patient's medical information via a secure Web site.
- *Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida* has developed a payer-based EHR that contains claim-based information routinely collected from physicians, pharmacies, labs and other providers.
- *Horizon Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Jersey* offers physicians a suite of Internet-based applications called Prism that provides claims-based medication and service histories for specific patients. Prism alerts physicians to issues that could affect patient care (e.g., pharmacy refill data) and allows physicians to benchmark their performance by major disease categories.
- *Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama* has created InfoSolutions, a medical information network that combines information from various sources into a single medical profile for a patient, allowing physicians to access medications, previous surgeries, test results, allergies or drug sensitivities, chronic conditions and immunization history.
- *CareFirst Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Delaware* provides emergency departments with patients' claims-based medication histories.

Helping Providers Adopt Health IT

- *Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan* has joined with General Motors, Ford and DaimlerChrysler in a pilot program offering incentives to 6,400 physicians to purchase e-Rx software and handheld computers.
- *Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina* will fund the technology and setup required for 1,000 primary care physicians who routinely write a large volume of prescriptions.
- *Highmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Pennsylvania* is contributing \$26.5 million to The Pittsburgh Foundation, which will use the funds to cover up to 75% of the cost for a physician's office to acquire, install and implement an e-Rx system
- *WellPoint* spent \$42 million to give 20,000 physicians in California, Georgia, Missouri and Wisconsin software and hardware options to automate key parts of their practices, including a wireless handheld device for transmitting prescriptions to pharmacies.

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association is made up of 39 independent, locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that collectively provide healthcare coverage for nearly 98 million –one-in-three – Americans.