eHealth Exchange Promotes Patient Data Exchange Across Health Orgs

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eHealth Exchange users reported high customer satisfaction across multiple areas, including patient data exchange and interoperability.

eHealth Exchange customers said the health information exchange (HIE) enables patient data exchange across state and regional HIEs and public health agencies, according to a recent *KLAS First Look* report.

Although a few respondents reported a lack of consistent support and platform navigation, all respondents said they would purchase the product again in the future.

eHealth Exchange, the nation's largest HIE, connects to 75 percent of all US hospitals, over 60 regional or state HIEs, and four government agencies, including Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Defense (DoD). KLAS interviewed 19 individuals from 19 unique organizations, made up of HIEs, clinics, hospitals, and various health systems to assess client satisfaction and use.

Nearly every respondent said the HIE supported integration goals, promoted needed functionality, and would recommend the service to a friend.

Sixty-seven percent of respondents said they were highly satisfied with the HIE overall, and 28 percent said they were satisfied. Meanwhile, only 5 percent of eHealth Exchange customers reported dissatisfaction with the HIE.

Following integration, 46 percent of respondents said they saw immediate results and an equal percentage saw results within six months. Less than 10 percent said they saw results between six and 12 months.

Over 60 percent of respondents said eHealth Exchange is easy to scale, while only 7 percent said it was not scalable. A little over 30 percent of customers reported it was scalable with effort.

When it comes to connectivity, 92 percent of respondents said they could connect with VA and DoD, 69 percent said they could connect with the Social Security Administration (SSA), 69 percent reported connectivity with 60 state and regional HIEs. In comparison, only 38 percent of respondents reported connectivity with public health agencies, and 23 percent said they could connect with the Indian Health Service (IHS).

The respondents reported several strengths, but most agreed that interoperability, especially with SSA and VA connections, was most beneficial. Customers also reported seeing value with the organization and most said the HIE works as well as expected and promoted.

"We wanted to be able to exchange the information and utilize the system to exchange with our state reporting agency," an anonymous manager told KLAS. "The system allows us to do that work easily and successfully. With the SSA, we have been hugely successful with our information exchange. There is a fast turnaround on the disability claims because the SSA can electronically obtain the information from us quickly."

However, some respondents said the HIE sometimes lacks health IT support and the platform can be difficult to navigate.

"eHealth Exchange's support is confusing. Sometimes when I try to seek out information, I feel like there are a couple of different steps to take before I can find out whether I have all of the information that I need," described an anonymous application manager.

Mike Davis of the KLAS Research Arch Collaborative said eHealth Exchange could address a few key interoperability areas.

"Land mines for interoperability include the ability to provide positive patient identification when exchanging patient information," Davis said. "How many Tom Smiths are there? The other challenge is creating an effective minimum discrete data set that can be used to improve care management and analytics. CDA information helps, but discrete patient data would be more useful."

Overall, Davis said eHealth Exchange has long-term viability across the healthcare sector.

"Promoting interoperability is a key focus of CMS to drive higher levels of patient care quality and safety," Davis explained. "The pandemic exposed the need for better information sharing between care providers. eHealth Exchange's ability to provide an interoperability solution that can be quickly implemented with standard exchange protocols and partners sets them up for long-term success."