

The Mass HIway:

Fact Sheet for Patients



The Mass HIway is a secure statewide Health Information Exchange that allows your healthcare providers to safely and quickly send your health information to where it is most needed.

Doctors or nurses can care for you better when they have important information about your health. The Mass HIway is designed to make this safer and faster. The goal is better care coordination and quality for you and your family.

What is the Mass HIway?

- Mass HIway is the statewide health information exchange (HIE). Healthcare providers can use the Mass HIway to quickly and securely send and receive your health information to better coordinate your care.
- The Mass HIway is managed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS).

How does the Mass HIway protect my information?

The Mass HIway has security measures in place to protect your information that aren't true of current methods, like fax, mail, or portable media like a CD or USB (flash drive), such as:

- Using a special code so that only authorized providers can read the information sent over the Mass HIway (this is known as encrypting data).
- Establishing policies and procedures that authorize the Mass HIway to suspend HIway participants as necessary to prevent unauthorized use of the Mass HIway.
- Overseeing who has access to the Mass HIway and who has used it for a patient's healthcare.

How can the Mass HIway help me?

- If you were discharged from a hospital, the Mass HIway can be used by the hospital to send your doctor a note about your hospital stay so that he or she is up to date about healthcare that you have received.
- If you get tests done, the doctor can use the Mass HIway to send the results to other members of your healthcare team, like your specialist. This helps them coordinate your care. It can also save time and money by reducing the need for repeat tests.
- If you have a chronic condition your health insurer case manager can use the Mass HIway to communicate with your doctors to coordinate your care and help you stay healthy.
- Not all of your healthcare providers may be using the Mass HIway yet. There may be more benefits to you as more healthcare organizations use the Mass HIway.

Who can use the Mass HIway and why?

- Currently the Mass HIway may only be used by healthcare organizations (like doctors' offices, hospitals, public health agencies, and health insurers).
- The Mass HIway can only be used for information sharing as allowed by federal and state privacy laws. You still need to give special permission for providers to request and receive certain sensitive information. You can speak to your healthcare provider about what information is sent over the Mass HIway.

Can I request my medical record from the Mass HIway?

- No. A patient's medical record itself is not part of the Mass HIway system. Talk to your provider for information about how to obtain your medical records.

Want more information?

- Talk with your doctor or their office staff about how they are using the Mass HIway.
- Visit www.masshiway.net, email us at masshiway@state.ma.us, or call us at 1-855-MA-HIway (624-4929) and press 3.