



news

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**Providers Alerted of Changes in Patient's Status in 'Real Time'**

*Program includes prescription drug monitoring to address opioid misuse*

**Miami Beach, Fla. – Sept. 25, 2018** – A unique statewide program in Rhode Island using Health Information Exchange (HIE) to alert providers within 10 minutes whenever their patients are admitted, discharged or transferred from a hospital or emergency department (ED) is reducing costs and improving care. The system also provides updates to patients' health records and monitoring of prescription drug use, according to information presented today at the [American Health Information Management Association's \(AHIMA\) 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention & Exhibit](#) in Miami.

"More than 500,000 patients – half of the state's population – have enrolled in CurrentCare, and access to the CurrentCare system and Care Management Alerts and Dashboard is available to all healthcare providers throughout the state," said Darlene Morris, senior director, development and grants, Rhode Island Quality Institute (RIQI). According to her presentation, "Leveraging Health Information Exchange to Share Data for Behavioral Health," the system is not dependent on electronic health records (EHRs) and can be accessed through a secure portal on the internet.

Patients also can opt to have a family member or friend receive the alerts. "This notification service can be especially valuable if loved ones of patients suffering from opioid use disorder or other mental health conditions are involved early on," Morris said.

According to Morris, Care Management Alerts and Dashboard:

- Decreased hospital readmissions by 19 percent and readmissions to the ED by 16 percent.
- Saved \$13.3 million due to fewer hospital and ED admissions and avoidance of duplicative radiology and unnecessary imaging.
- Improves care coordination, increases efficiencies and saves time for care team and patients. Prior to using the alerts, 57 percent of surveyed providers reported spending 11 or more hours identifying high-risk patients and none spent less than six hours. After implementation of Care Management Alerts and Dashboards, none spent more than 10

hours and 25 percent spent five or fewer hours. “We’ve also been told by providers that timely follow-up care leads to improved outcomes and improved communication with patients that strengthen the patient-provider relationship. Some patients have reported that their doctors’ offices called them after discharge from the hospital before they even arrived back home,” Morris said.

- Facilitates medication reconciliation, which allows providers to monitor contraindications with drugs prescribed by other providers, patient adherence to medications and medication history.
- Aids in locating patients. “For example, in substance abuse treatment programs, patients sometimes stop coming. Providers will get an alert if the patient has been admitted to a hospital or emergency department,” Morris said.
- Helps providers meet regulatory requirements. “Behavioral health providers in particular have requirements they must meet, such as timely follow up after a client is discharged from a hospital, and monitoring medications taken for medical as well as psychological problems.”
- Prepares physicians for billing and reimbursement models required as providers transition from fee-for-service to merit-based incentives by helping them follow their patients and intervene in a timely fashion.

Alerts are sent via secure email message or displayed in a dashboard that can be exported into a spreadsheet. Available information includes the patient’s longitudinal health record and demographics, where the patient is (often including room number in the hospital), the reason for admission, discharge disposition, and patient scores for comorbidity and readmission risks. A neighborhood risk score will be added soon, Morris said.

“The CurrentCare initiative is one example of the innovative contributions made by health information management (HIM) professionals to improve the quality and continuity of care,” said AHIMA CEO Wylecia Wiggs Harris, PhD, CAE. “When providers have easy access to a complete view of their patients’ health records and history, and near real-time updates in patient status, they can respond quickly in situations that require timely intervention.”

### **Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP)**

RIQI is now implementing a new means to access the statewide PDMP designed to address the opioid crisis in Rhode Island, which has the seventh highest fatal overdose rate in the nation. The program was piloted last year at Rhode Island’s largest Integrated Delivery Network (IDN), a hospital system that sees nearly half of all emergency visits in the state. “We integrated the PDMP into the system’s EHR and implemented Care Management Alerts and Dashboards in six opioid treatment programs, which includes 14 sites and more than 5,000 clients with opioid use disorder,” Morris said.

With PDMP integrated into the EHR, prescription drug information is directly available to clinicians whenever a patient is registered in the ED or when a prescription is ordered in the ED or hospital—without having to leave the EHR and go to a separate screen to access PDMP information. The pilot program found that PDMP integration into the EHR:

- Reduced provider burden by eliminating the need to log into a separate system.
- Increased vigilance in prescribing opioids by making it much more likely that providers will check the PDMP information prior to prescribing opioids
- Increased provider compliance with state regulations, which require prescribing providers to monitor recent drug use before prescribing.

Morris's presentation is one of several addressing trends in the post-acute or alternate setting. For details on additional presentations on this topic and others, visit the [educational tracks page](#) of the AHIMA Convention & Exhibit website.

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### **About Rhode Island Quality Institute**

The Rhode Island Quality Institute is a nonprofit organization formed in 2002 with a mission to improve health and advance the quality and value of care. With federal funding, RIQI developed and operates CurrentCare, the statewide health information exchange

### **About AHIMA**

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) represents more than 103,000 health information professionals in the United States and around the world. AHIMA is committed to promoting and advocating for best practices and effective standards in health information and to actively contributing to the development and advancement of health information professionals worldwide. AHIMA is advancing informatics, data analytics, and information governance to achieve the goal of providing expertise to ensure trusted information for healthcare. [www.ahima.org](http://www.ahima.org)