Interoperability:
In healthcare, interoperability is where multiple technology platforms and software applications are able to connect, communicate, and exchange data. However, it’s about more than just making connections—it’s about making the right connections!

January 2014

Introduction
Health information systems need to work together within and across institutional and geographic boundaries. To do this, there needs to be a secure, reliable connection hub. We are that connection hub—your connection point. We take a holistic approach to connecting people, data and organizations across the continuum of care to ultimately enrich lives by bringing communities together.
Bring together a network of healthcare providers and partners to ensure you have the right information at the right time to make the best care giving decisions for the resident.

Making Community Connections

Our interoperable solutions bring together a network of healthcare providers and partners to ensure you have the right information at the right time to make the best care giving decisions for the resident. While some connections are supported by only a single method of sharing data, most can be performed using multiple methods, and can be tailored to your organizational needs and capabilities.

The type of information that can be exchanged includes orders, therapy documentation, pre-admission data, and census information as well as Continuity of Care Documents (CCD) using Clinical Document Architecture specifications. Thus, the most accurate information remains with the resident regardless of where they are within the community of care.

Connected Care

We bring together a network of healthcare providers and partners to give you the right information at the right time.
How do we Connect?

Our interoperability solution uses a variety of industry-recognized methods to connect your PointClickCare EHR to multiple external systems, healthcare partners, and technology providers.

Discrete Data Messaging

This method of exchanging information is supported by a number of industry standards such as HL7 and NCPDP, and is based on using point-to-point communication formats between two systems. Organizations typically use discrete data messaging to connect two vendor systems, such as their EHR with pharmacies, laboratories, or therapy vendor systems. This is the preferred method for providers to connect with other organizations and providers, such as hospitals, Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs), Health Information Exchanges (HIEs), and Health Information Services Providers (HISPs).

Direct Messaging

Designed to be simple yet secure, Direct Messaging enables organizations to exchange clinical data between healthcare providers through encrypted documentation attachments. Using a secure email address administered by a HISPs, a healthcare provider can quickly exchange any HIPAA protected communication or clinical documentation between different systems or organizations with just a single connection point.

Secure Text Messaging

In a world that is continually becoming more mobile, it is critical for practitioners and nursing home staff to remain connected even while on the go. Secure text messaging ensures that everyone involved in the care of a resident remains apprised of any changes in condition so that prompt and appropriate action can be taken. And because it’s secure, the privacy of you and your resident is never compromised.

Digital Fax

Using Digital Fax capabilities, users send a secure fax document directly from the PointClickCare EHR over the internet. Similar to Direct Messaging, providers use a number administered by an approved electronic fax vendor to quickly transmit any HIPAA protected communication or clinical documentation securely between systems or organizations with just a single connection point. This feature is currently under development.

How we Connect

We use a variety of industry-recognized methods to connect to multiple members of the healthcare community.
Are you ready to start connecting your PointClickCare EHR to the healthcare community? To help you get on the right path, we have put together a list of questions to assist you on the road to interoperability.

Questions for your organization

What data can we send from the PointClickCare EHR?

PointClickCare currently only shares data supported in the HL7 standard CCD record format. In meeting HL7 standards, PointClickCare follows industry-recognized guidelines when engaged with other systems in the exchange, integration, sharing, and retrieval of electronic health information. It is important to evaluate which modules of the PointClickCare EHR your organization is using to understand what clinical information is available to share in a CCD record.

PointClickCare generates a C32 CCD based on the content of the Transfer Assessment. PointClickCare is currently testing this functionality with a limited number of clients. By the end of 2013, PointClickCare plans to also generate a C32 and Consolidated CCD from the Transfer event and on request.

When should I send a CCD on a resident?

PointClickCare recommends that staff always evaluate the particular reason for sharing resident clinical information to determine the right timing and frequency. Federal and state laws require that residents give permission or be allowed to withhold consent for use of their individually identifiable health information (IIHI) for purposes other than direct resident care.

Since names can be very similar, it is important to understand how you will be able to uniquely identify the information being exchanged is for the correct resident. Misfiling or updating the resident clinical record with incorrect information can impact the quality of care delivered and/or cause adverse clinical events.

Does my organization need a Direct Message email address?

The need for a Direct Message email address account will depend on what type of organizations you want to connect with. PointClickCare highly recommends that an organization obtain at least one email address account from a preferred HISP partner for each facility.

If your organization already has a Direct Message email address account, PointClickCare will work to ensure connectivity with all HISPs utilized by our customers. Currently, you can save content from the PointClickCare EHR and attach these documents to your secure email.

Should my organization participate in an HIE?

There are various types of HIEs – public or private; statewide, regional, or local. HIEs may be closed or open and may either serve as a pass-through to exchange information or may aggregate and store information. Some HIEs may even focus on sharing particular types of data such as lab and radiology results. It is important to consider your information sharing needs when deciding on the type of HIE organization in which you will participate, and to find out how the HIE serves as a hub and connects with other organizations for information sharing.

Many HIEs receive federal/state funding, but remember this funding isn’t structured to be permanent. If you are considering joining an HIE who relies on this funding, it is important to understand the business model the HIE plans to follow when this funding runs out. The membership, service, and transaction fees that you and other participants incur must be able to cover not only the start-up costs but ongoing operations.
My organization wants to participate in a grant, how do I do that and is funding available for participating?

It is important to be aware that many grants come with commitments that should be discussed with all stakeholders (i.e., the fund provider, facility, organization, PointClickCare, HIE, etc.) to ensure all parties are aware of the grant’s expectations and that participation in the grant program can be supported.

Questions for Others

Does my HIE support Direct Messaging or should I just use their portal?

Some HIEs may support Direct Messaging while others may only use a portal for data exchange. This will often depend on if the HIE acts as their own HISP or use an HISP for support of Direct Messaging. A discussion between your organization and your HIE is often required. Based on the HIE and their offerings, a solution for use with the PointClickCare EHR can be recommended to fit your requirements.

How do I give my residents a copy of their clinical record when they leave?

Within the PointClickCare EHR, you can generate a CCD record that can be printed. The CCD record provides clinical information based on the last 90 days of information for their record in the PointClickCare EHR.

How do I share clinical information with a resident’s practitioner?

Provided that the physician has a Direct Messaging email address, you can send the CCD record, as well as other PointClickCare reports securely to the practitioner. In addition, the CCD record can be sent to an HIE in which the practitioner has access.

Should I connect directly with a hospital EHR to send a CCD record?

Connecting directly with a hospital often requires configuration based on the EHR system. Depending on the capabilities of the hospital EHR, it may be possible to connect directly from the PointClickCare EHR. Typically, this will require some development, configuration and testing on the part of PointClickCare and the hospital EHR to send and receive a CCD record in HL-7 format.

As another option, you may want to use an HIE to share information with the hospital. Your organization will also be able to access clinical information through the HIE that has been provided by the hospital and other sources of resident clinical data.

How do I connect to another EHR system?

Currently if you have a Direct Messaging secure email address, you can send and receive resident clinical information as email attachments outside of the PointClickCare EHR and then associate the attachment and content with a resident record.

There is current development work underway to accept inbound documents and send documents outbound directly from within the PointClickCare EHR. Once in place, staff will be alerted about received documents that need to be viewed and attached to a resident clinical record.

Can PointClickCare accept an inbound CCD record?

There is current development work underway to accept an inbound CCD record. Once completed, the PointClickCare EHR will accept a CCD record and attempt to automatically match it to a resident’s clinical record. If the system is unable to find a match, a user will be able to manually match the CCD record to a resident. The information will then be stored in the resident’s clinical record in the PointClickCare EHR.

Can a CCD record, received from a hospital, help with medication reconciliation?

Later stages of development of CCD capabilities in the PointClickCare EHR will include reconciliation of medications, problems, and allergies. In the meantime, the CCD record can be attached to a resident’s clinical record. Once attached to a resident’s clinical record, facility staff should review the CCD record for any new or relevant information and enter it into the PointClickCare EHR.
How do I get lab or diagnostic information in the PointClickCare EHR?

PointClickCare is currently working on integrating lab results into the PointClickCare EHR using the Liaison EMR-Link™, a laboratory results clearinghouse. We suggest that you check with your laboratory provider to see if they currently submit results to Liaison. If they do not, we suggest that you inquire on having them do so.

Common Acronyms

CCD – Continuity of Care Document
CDA – Clinical Document Architecture
EHR – Electronic Health Record
HIE – Health Information Exchange
HISP – Health Information Service Provider
HL-7 – Health Level Seven


With so many different technologies and platforms managing data along the resident life cycle, the proper capture, storage and secure dissemination of confidential, personal information is critical to managing the health of both people and businesses alike. PointClickCare is your trusted partner and secure connection point for every person and organization across the continuum of care. We make healthcare work better by helping it work together.

About PointClickCare

PointClickCare helps healthcare providers meet the global challenges of senior care by enabling them to achieve the business results that matter – delivering the highest quality of care at the lowest cost. PointClickCare’s cloud-based software platform connects healthcare providers across the senior care continuum, providing easy to use, regulatory compliant solutions that support a coordinated, person-centered approach to care delivery. Over 9,000 long term and post-acute care homes use PointClickCare today, making it the North American market leader and Electronic Health Record platform of choice for the senior care industry.

For more information, please contact us at: info@pointclickcare.com