

## Physician Talking Points

### *What Your Patients Should Know About Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect*

#### **What is Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect or a Health Information Exchange (HIE)?**

Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect is a Health Information Exchange (HIE) which allows authorized care givers, like doctors and hospitals who treat you, to access your patient health care information. We access your information through a secure electronic network, which helps us get the most up-to date information on you, quickly and efficiently.

#### **How safe is my information in the Health Information Exchange (HIE)?**

First and foremost, your privacy, safety and security are the most importance to me, as well as our staff. Because your health information is protected by secure user names and passwords assigned to physician office staff, we can:

- Safeguards on your information – you have to have access to the system to see anything
- Through reporting and tracking audit who in our office has accessed your information.
- Better meet all State and Federal laws regarding the protection of your health information, because it's electronically guarded

#### **How does Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect benefit me?**

Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect helps me access your most recent information quickly, to provide you with safer and more efficient care. We can then provide:

- **Faster results** – If we order a test, we can deliver the results to your primary physician safely and quickly
- **Coordinated care** - Your records can speak for you, especially if you can't. This system lets me see information that could save your life – like drug interactions, drug allergies or previous medical conditions that could impact the way I provide care to you.
- **Cost Savings** - I can see any lab results you may have had administered recently by another doctor. Reading test results that can help me, which keeps me from duplicating tests -- saving you time and money.
- **Patient Safety and Security** – Because our files are electronically secured and password-protected, Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect provides you with an extra layer of protection that paper charts can't provide. The HIE tracks who has viewed your information and patients can request a report from the Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect at any time

#### **What kind of medical information can my doctors see through Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect?**

Your doctors will have access to important clinical information that can help them make better decisions about your care, including:

- Lab results
- Pathology and radiology results

- Cardiology reports
- Current and previous medications
- Hospital ER visits
- Medical diagnosis and surgeries, and much more.

**Can I view my own health information?**

Currently, Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect does not provide an option to view your own information.

**What happens if my health information is unlawfully accessed?**

If you believe that a person, agency or organization covered under HIPAA violated your health information privacy rights or committed another violation of the Privacy Rule, you may file a complaint with the federal Office for Civil Rights. Anyone found in violation of HIPAA can be civilly and criminally prosecuted.

**Does Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect share my health information with employers or health insurance companies?**

No. Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect only provides patient health information exclusively between health care providers for treatment purposes. Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect does not share health information with any employers. Additionally, the HIPAA Privacy Rule absolutely prohibits healthcare providers and plans from disclosing personal health information to employers without a patient's explicit, written authorization.

Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect does not include claims processing or other interactions with health plans. If providers could transmit standard insurance claims through Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect, only the minimum necessary information would be included to ensure providers are paid for the health care services they provide to you.

**What if I don't want my providers to have access to my health information?**

You can opt out of having your health information shared electronically by notifying Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect. However, if you opt out, your health information will likely be tracked on paper and other health care providers may not be able to see your information electronically. If you change your mind and want to participate, you can easily opt back in by notifying Carolinas HealthCare System CareConnect.

**What do you think I should do?**

Every patient is different, and I can't counsel you on what is best for you. I am still able to access your information through previously-used methods, it may just take longer and I might not have a full picture of your recent health history. I would encourage you to read more about the HIE online and determine for yourself before choosing to opt-out.