



Better Health Care

What is an Electronic Health Record (EHR)?

_An electronic health record (EHR) is a computerized version of your important health information. The federal government has set a goal for most Americans to have their health records stored electronically by 2014, and many health care providers across Kansas, and the country, are in the process of converting traditional paper records to EHRs. Having your complete health history in one place – in an emergency or for an annual exam – means **better care for you and your family.**

EHRs protect your privacy

_While EHRs make accessing your health history more convenient, your privacy is still a priority. The Privacy Rule under the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requires that health care providers take steps to protect the privacy of your records. The information they share is limited to the minimum amount necessary to perform their job.

As a health care consumer, you have the right to access your personal health information. Health care providers must honor your right to:

- Request a copy of your health information
- Request corrections be made to your records

You have the right to opt-out of the sharing of your health record and restrict access to your health record. To request a restriction, visit KanHIT.org. However, choosing to restrict access means your health records may not be available for your treatment in an emergency. For more information about your right to opt-out, visit **KanHIT.org**.



An electronic health record communicates when you can't.

_Accidents happen. So make sure your full health history is in one place, any time you need it.



Kansas Health Information Technology



Lifesaving Data



Accessible Anywhere



Protected Information

EHRs provide essential health information

_An emergency is not the ideal time to share your complete health history – and a lack of details about your health could put your life at risk. Health care providers using electronic health records (EHRs) can quickly see your health history, including test results, drug allergies, prior diagnoses and medications.

Other benefits of EHRs:

- Health care providers get a complete picture of your health – which means you receive better health care.
- An electronic version of your health history is easy to understand. (If you've ever wondered how the pharmacist deciphered a handwritten prescription, you're not alone!)
- Computerized access to health data saves time as well as reduces medical errors, duplicate tests and added costs.

Your health records now travel with you

_Once health care providers in Kansas have completed the conversion to electronic health records (EHRs), they will be able to join a health information organization (HIO) – allowing your health information to be accessed by any health care provider treating you. For example, your cardiologist could electronically retrieve your health records from your primary health care provider, which avoids the wait for paper records and enhances your overall treatment. Or, if you face an emergency out of town, your health information will be available quickly.

In addition, EHRs are automatically backed up and accessible from any location, even in a disaster. If a flood, tornado or fire occurs, your health records won't end up lost or damaged.

EHRs are secure and private

_EHRs must comply with the 1996 federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act's (HIPAA) privacy and security rules, which require that your health information be protected. Unlike paper records – which can be lost or stolen – EHRs can be set up so that only authorized individuals can access your data.

Other security features designed to protect your records:

- A valid password and personal identification number (PIN) are required to access the computer system.
- A tracking system can detect who has looked at your health information.
- Health care providers are trained to handle and protect the integrity, security and privacy of your health information.