



Department of Health

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

HOWARD A. ZUCKER, M.D., J.D.
Commissioner

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Executive Deputy Commissioner

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Re: SHIN-NY Provider Alerts During COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear SHIN-NY Qualified Entities (QEs) and QE Participants:

The current COVID-19 outbreak has been declared a global pandemic. As part of the response to the current situation, the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) is utilizing all available health information technology sharing resources, including the Statewide Health Information Network for New York (SHIN-NY).

The QEs of the SHIN-NY currently send Patient Care Alerts without consent as part of their regular services. Patient Care Alerts are electronic messages about a development in a patient's medical care, such as an emergency room or inpatient hospital admission or discharge, a scheduled outpatient surgery or other procedure, or similar event, which is derived from information maintained by a QE and is transmitted by the QE to subscribing recipients but does not allow the recipient to access any Protected Health Information through the QE other than the information contained in the messages. Patient Care Alerts may contain demographic information such as patient name and date of birth, the name of the QE participant (health care provider) from which the patient received treatment, and limited information related to the patient's complaint or diagnosis, but the Patient Care Alerts do not include the patient's full medical record.

To support COVID-19 response efforts, **NYSDOH is requesting all QEs to send COVID-19 laboratory test result notifications to providers using their Patient Care Alerts.** These notifications will be sent to providers who have an established relationship with patients. Specifically, the providers will be notified that a patient received a COVID-19 screening and the results of that screening (positive or negative). These notifications will be generated regardless of the clinical laboratory test result data's source, which could be a QE participant in the same QE, a different QE, the NYSDOH electronic clinical laboratory reporting system (ECLRS), or some other source.

This is consistent with the existing SHIN-NY Policies and Procedures section 1.2.9 (Patient Care Alerts, https://www.health.ny.gov/technology/regulations/shin-ny/docs/privacy_and_security_policies.pdf). All information data safeguards will remain in place to ensure the information stays protected in accordance with State guidelines.

The complete SHIN-NY regulations can be found here: https://www.health.ny.gov/technology/regulations/shin-ny/docs/privacy_and_security_policies.pdf, and questions concerning this or other policies can be sent to shin-ny@health.ny.gov.