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Rochester RHIO Receives Grant to Support Data Health Equity Project in 14-County Finger Lakes Region

Rochester, NY—May 11, 2021—The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about broad recognition of racial disparities in healthcare, and many across the Greater Rochester region have joined together to declare racism a public health crisis. Now, [Rochester RHIO](#) is leading the way to address the role that accurate and consistent race, ethnicity and gender data play in the identification, treatment and analysis of patient care.

RHIO has received funding from the [Greater Rochester Health Foundation](#) to improve the quality and completeness of the demographic data collected and shared in electronic health record systems across the region in an effort to reduce disparities in care. Rochester RHIO will be working with [Common Ground Health](#) on this effort.

In late 2020, [ACT Rochester](#) released a report documenting disparities confronting African Americans and Latinos in the Rochester region. Accurate healthcare data supports community initiatives, reporting, research and evaluation, and facilitates public health practitioners as they help underserved populations reach their full health potential.

The Rochester RHIO coordinates the essential data exchange with state and county public health offices to provide regional access to information about COVID-19 testing and vaccination data.

The grant provides \$222,000 over two years to develop best practice guidelines for data collection, normalization, and analysis of demographic data in Rochester RHIO's data hub, the region's trusted health information exchange. The project will focus on improvements that allow people to self-identify and expand reporting options beyond one race or ethnicity category, and create a standard that better accommodates patient data for those who identify as non-binary or non-conforming.

"Robust, inclusive and accurate data is critical to providing specific population health needs and effective interventions to practitioners responsible for addressing public health and patient care," said Jill Eisenstein, Rochester RHIO president and chief executive officer. "RHIO has long been recognized for its progressive, innovative approach to supporting collaborative healthcare and this project is one more way we can help our region move forward."

For more information contact Rochester RHIO at 877-865-7446 (RHIO) or info@grrhio.org.

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About Rochester RHIO

Rochester RHIO is a secure electronic health information exchange serving authorized medical providers and over one million patients in Monroe, Allegany, Cayuga, Chemung, Genesee, Livingston, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates counties in Upstate New York. The service allows a medical care team to share records across institutions and practices, making patient information available wherever and whenever needed to provide the best care. Patients benefit from fewer repeated tests, easier second opinions, a reduced risk of mistakes caused by poor handwriting or incomplete records, and more informed care during office visits and emergencies. It is a Qualified Entity of the Statewide Health Information Network of New York (SHIN-NY). Health care professionals and patients can learn more by visiting [RochesterRHIO.org](#) or by calling 877-865-RHIO (7446).

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