**ROCHESTER RHIO**

Regional Health Information Organization

NEWS

## Rochester RHIO Completes Data Normalization Project to Improve the Efficiency and Quality of Healthcare Delivery

*Adoption of Standardized Codes Made Possible with Help of
Greater Rochester Health Foundation Grant*

**ROCHESTER, N.Y., May 5, 2016** — The Rochester Regional Health Information Organization (RHIO) announced today the completion of a three-year, grant-funded project to standardize a set of codes and naming conventions used for laboratory test results and clinical reports throughout its 13-county service area. The standardization makes it easier for health care providers and other medical professionals to more fully evaluate a patient's lab results, regardless of where the tests were performed.

The initiative was made possible by a 2013 Greater Rochester Health Foundation Regional Data Normalization (RDN) Opportunity Grant. Over the past three years, the Rochester RHIO worked in partnership with laboratory clinicians and representatives from urban and rural hospitals, private practices, and community health centers to understand the challenges associated with the coding and naming conventions of lab results and reports, and to identify common data normalization needs.

"We learned from our partners that the naming convention of reports impacted the workflow in physician practices," said Jill Eisenstein, executive director, Rochester RHIO. "When the name of a report was not clearly described, it was difficult for practice staff to locate the report when needed, or to easily file the report within a patient's record."

Lab codes, while in the background, are an important part of healthcare. They are the building blocks for the framework of a patient's electronic healthcare record. Having community-level codes for laboratory tests ensures data consistency and improves analysis at all levels of patient care.

Through this process, the Rochester RHIO successfully met its goal of standardizing community laboratory (LOINC) codes used in 80 percent of the lab results sent securely through the Rochester RHIO's health information exchange. Now, labs have agreed to adopt a community standard of codes—while also keeping their own internal naming conventions—to describe laboratory tests such as strep throat cultures, glucose levels, and cholesterol and triglycerides levels.

"We are so thankful to the Greater Rochester Health Foundation for recognizing the value of this initiative and granting the funding to get us to this point," said Eisenstein. "The standardization saves providers valuable time as they consult the RHIO's health information exchange in the process of caring for their patients each day."

Rochester RHIO serves 13 counties in the Finger Lakes region, and is a qualified entity of the Statewide Health Information Network of New York (SHIN-NY). Rochester RHIO offers authorized medical providers access to test results, lab reports, radiology results, medical reports, insurance eligibility and more.

For more information, visit www.RochesterRHIO.org.

### About Rochester RHIO

Rochester RHIO is a secure electronic health information exchange serving authorized medical providers and over one million consenting patients in Monroe, Allegany, 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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