What is health information exchange?

Health information exchange (HIE) improves the accessibility of your medical records. For decades, the Department of Defense (DoD) has operated its own HIE that allows clinicians to view your medical history electronically, no matter where you received care. For example, if you were seen by providers at Madigan Army Medical Center, Naval Hospital Oak Harbor and Wright-Patterson Air Force Medical Center, your current DoD clinician can access medical records received at all of those previous locations.

What is the VLER HIE?

The Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record Health Information Exchange is expanding DoD’s data sharing to include civilian network providers. The goal is to share relevant parts of your DoD medical record electronically, safely and securely with participating providers.

For more information, visit www.TRICARE.mil/vler
As part of the VLER HIE, the Military Health System (MHS) has joined national efforts to safely and securely share your health care information electronically with participating eHealth Exchange* providers from which you may receive care. By participating in the VLER HIE, your health care providers have a more complete view of your health care record.

**How does this benefit me?**

Sharing your health information saves time and improves your care. It could even save your life. The MHS, partnering with the eHealth Exchange*, allows participating providers to safely and securely share your health information. The more information your provider has about your medical history, the better. Currently, through the eHealth Exchange*, your health care providers can share information, such as:

- Prescriptions and medications
- Allergies
- Illnesses
- Laboratory and radiology results
- Immunizations
- Procedures
- Clinical Notes

*To improve your care experience, health information may be shared as permitted by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) with other authorized organizations who partner with the MHS. To enhance coordination among care teams, this includes notes written by your clinicians, which could contain information about sexual assault, domestic violence, child/elder abuse, substance abuse, mental health, and sexually transmitted diseases.

Access to your medical information is very important to your health care providers. Participating in the VLER HIE provides a more complete picture of your health record. This allows you and your health care providers to make the most informed decisions for your health. Information shared through the eHealth Exchange is the same as available through the TRICARE Online Patient Portal (TOLPP) Blue Button. If a patient wants to see what will be shared, they can log into the TOLPP at [www.TRICAREonline.com](http://www.TRICAREonline.com) and click on the Blue Button.

**How do I participate?**

This service is already part of your health care benefit, so there is no other action needed to participate. Starting June 2016, the MHS began sharing non-active duty service member data with participating eHealth Exchange* health care providers. Active duty service members cannot opt out of the health information exchange process.

If you are a non-active duty service member beneficiary and choose to opt out, the MHS will not be allowed to share your health care information through the eHealth Exchange, even in the case of an emergency.

**How do I opt out from participating?**

For information about how to opt out, please visit [www.TRICARE.mil/vler](http://www.TRICARE.mil/vler) to obtain the VLER HIE opt out letter. Most people recognize the benefits of sharing their medical information with their health care providers caring for them, and continue to participate in the health information exchange through the VLER HIE. If you choose to opt out, you will always have the option to opt back in.

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*eHEALTH EXCHANGE*

The eHealth Exchange is a network of exchange partners who securely share clinical information across the United States. To see a list of participating organizations/exchanges, please visit [www.TRICARE.mil/vler](http://www.TRICARE.mil/vler) or ask the organizations where you receive care if they are members of eHealth Exchange.