**PARTICIPATION ANNOUNCEMENT TO INTERNAL STAFF [TEMPLATE]**

*This document is intended to assist participating organizations in communicating the objective and value of HealthInfoNet and Maine’s statewide Health Information Exchange to internal staff.*

Announcement Template

We are always looking for new ways to improve the quality and safety of patient care. That’s why we have connected with HealthInfoNet, an independent nonprofit health information services organization that manages Maine’s statewide Health Information Exchange (HIE). The HIE is a secure computer system that will help us share our patients’ important health information, such as registration details, visit information, allergies, conditions, diagnoses, test results, and other reports, with each of their health care providers.

The key to HealthInfoNet's system is that it links a patient’s health information from unaffiliated health care organizations to create a single, comprehensive electronic health record. Having access to this system will give our staff more of the information they need to make the best decisions possible when treating our patients, especially in situations when waiting for a fax or an email is often out of the question.

While we believe the use of HealthInfoNet’s system will better support and coordinate patient care for our organization, our patients are given choices under Maine state law for how they wish to participate in sharing their health information with the statewide HIE. All patients have the right to choose not to share any of their information by “opting out” using a consent form process we will make available as part of our standard workflows. Over 98% of patients receiving care in Maine choose to participate in the HIE to support their care coordination needs. Additionally, the HIE has other consent options that allow patients to share their sensitive health information beyond just general medical information.

To educate our patients about HealthInfoNet’s consent options, along with general information about our use of HealthInfoNet’s services, we will be updating our Notice of Privacy Practices and conducting a patient awareness campaign.

To assist our staff in speaking about HealthInfoNet with patients, friends, family, and the community at large, supplemental resources and materials about HealthInfoNet and Maine’s statewide HIE can be found [organization to provide internal location where staff can find materials from HealthInfoNet’s Communication Package]. Additionally, we will provide staff training and education with the goal of informing our patients about HealthInfoNet. There will be more information on those opportunities to come.

If you have any questions about this exciting partnership, please do not hesitate to contact [organization to provide desired internal contact] or visit [www.hinfonet.org](http://www.hinfonet.org) for more information.