**PARTICIPANT INTERNAL STAFF COMMUNICATION TEMPLATE**

*The purpose of this document is intended to assist participating organizations in communicating the objective and value of HealthInfoNet and the state of Maine’s Health Information Exchange.*

Draft Communication

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

The key to HealthInfoNet's system is that it links an individual patient’s clinical information from unaffiliated healthcare organizations to create a single electronic health record. Having access to this system will give our authorized 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.

Until now, we’ve shared a patient’s health information with their treating providers primarily through fax, email, or physical mail. With HealthInfoNet, that manual process is now automated electronically to provide real-time, instant access to our patients’ medical information from their team of providers when we need it to care for them.

While we believe the use of HealthInfoNet’s system will better support and coordinate patient care, patients are given choices under Maine state law for how they wish to participate in sharing their information. 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 standard workflows, such as registration. Over 98% of patients residing in Maine choose to participate in the HIE to assist their care coordination needs. There are other consent options for sensitive information sharing, where applicable.

To educate our patients about these 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 the HIE can be found [organization to provide internal location where staff can find additional documentation from the Communications Package]. Additionally, we will provide staff training and education to help inform 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.