

DirectABILITY

What is DirectABILITY and How Do I Use It?



What is Direct?

Direct is an open standard with broad industry and government support for sending health information over the Internet in a secure, standards-compliant method. Direct is designed to help healthcare providers, departments of health, payers, and other healthcare facilities communicate securely, with each other and with their patients, to deliver higher quality and more affordable care. The Direct Project focuses on giving participants a simple, secure, scalable, standards-based way to send authenticated, encrypted health information directly to known and trusted recipients over the Internet.

What is DirectABILITY?

DirectABILITY allows secure communication of health information among healthcare participants who already know and trust each other, and automated workflows for managing additions to and removals from users' trusted networks. Now when a hospital, clinic or medical group that is part of the ABILITY network wants to establish a channel of communications in order to send health-related messages to any other Direct-enabled entity, they can do so easily, securely and in compliance with regulations such as HIPAA.

What is a HISP?

HISP stands for Health Information Service Provider. A HISP is the organization or company you contract with to provide access to the Direct network. ABILITY is a HISP, and DirectABILITY is the ABILITY Direct service offering.

Who will use DirectABILITY?

Many providers and healthcare organizations can exchange information today. Exchanges within an organization typically occur through the use of Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems. Other types of exchanges both within and outside an organization occur via mail, fax or courier. Anyone who is interested or involved in the exchange of health information is a potential user of DirectABILITY including HIEs, hospitals, payers, clinics, physicians, healthcare facilities other healthcare professionals as well as patients. Any workflows involving paper exchanges (e.g., printer, fax, and courier) can easily be replaced by DirectABILITY, optimizing both cost and benefit with a more immediate, more secure and faster digital exchange.

How Can I Use DirectABILITY?

DirectABILITY can be used to securely communicate health information with anyone on the nationwide Direct network. DirectABILITY provides easy to use web interfaces for sending and receiving Direct messages in your web browser and administering your trust relationships. Additionally, DirectABILITY offers secure integration with your preferred email client on your desktop, tablet computer or smart phone. DirectABILITY also offers multiple programmatic APIs (Application Programming Interface) for integration into existing platforms such as your EHR system (Electronic Health Record). DirectABILITY has a comprehensive developer kit with documentation to help you get started integrating Direct with your existing software.

What can I do with DirectABILITY?

There are many different use cases that can be leveraged using DirectABILITY that fulfills CMS quality measures as well as stage 1 & 2 meaningful use. The ability to send information securely across the Internet may include:

- A family practice physician sends referral information to a specialist.
- A rural clinic transmits immunization data to a public health department.
- A multi-specialty group shares clinical disease surveillance data with the Centers for Disease Control.
- An academic medical center requests verification of eligibility information from a payer.
- A payer requests additional clinical information on a patient from a large hospital.

How do I sign up for an account?

You will be asked to complete a registration form to obtain a DirectABILITY account. Because Direct is a trusted network you will be required to go through an extra identity verification step.

How will I be able to connect with others?

DirectABILITY enables you to communicate with all participants on the nationwide Direct network. Because mutual trust is a tenet of the Direct network. DirectABILITY has an easy to use interface for looking up and trusting existing Direct participants and inviting non-participants to join the network.

What kinds of information can I send and receive with DirectABILITY?

Just about any type of health information can be transmitted over DirectABILITY. DirectABILITY is content-agnostic; supporting the transport of structured data such as HL7 and CCDs as well as unstructured data such as PDF scans of existing paper forms or free form messages. Any type of health information you currently exchange with your partners may be sent securely with DirectABILITY.

Do I need any special equipment or will this require technical support?

To start using DirectABILITY today you don't need any special equipment. The web browser and Internet connection you're using right now will allow you access to DirectABILITY and the nationwide Direct network. The web interface is easy to use and looks like just the email programs you're already familiar with, and as mentioned client email programs such as Microsoft Outlook and Mozilla Thunderbird work with DirectABILITY out-of-the-box.

For more technical Direct enablement such as integration with your EHR DirectABILITY additional equipment may be required. To connect with a DirectABILITY expert who can help you get started integrating with DirectABILITY today send an email to direct@abilitynetwork.com



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