



ABC of NC

## **ABC of NC Child Development Center Plans Connection to the North Carolina Health Information Exchange – NC HealthConnex**

The U.S. health care system is experiencing a technological transformation. With the changes in value-based care reimbursement models, sharing data will be imperative. That is why we will work to connect our electronic medical record system with North Carolina's state-designated health information exchange – NC HealthConnex.

Operated by the North Carolina Health Information Exchange Authority (NC HIEA) housed in the North Carolina Department of Information Technology, NC HealthConnex is a secure, electronic network that facilitates a conversation between health care providers by linking information from separate health care sites to create a more complete health record of our patients. The NC HIEA will be a valuable tool to help us improve health care quality, enhance patient safety, and reduce overall health care costs by enabling information to be accessed securely whenever our clinical staff needs it.

Although our organization already shares patient information with providers caring for our patients, often this process is performed through fax or mail when the provider is outside of our system. NC HealthConnex empowers providers with near-time access to our patients' medical information from other participating providers when we need it to deliver care in a seamless and secure manner. This is especially important in emergency situations when waiting for a fax or email is often out of the question.

As more providers across the state sign up to utilize NC HealthConnex, the more robust the exchange of health information will be, saving time, reducing paperwork, facilitating more informed decision-making, improving care coordination, and enabling better health outcomes.

While we believe the use of networks like NC HealthConnex will help ensure North Carolina's patients are receiving safe, integrated and high-quality care, patients can choose to opt-out from having their health information shared through the health information exchange network. To educate our patients about this option along with general information about our use of NC HealthConnex, we will be updating our Notice of Privacy Practices and providing educational materials to our patients.

To assist our employees in speaking about this new partnership with patients, friends, family, and the community at large, we will be providing a list of talking points. For employees and clinicians with direct contact with patients, we will provide additional training and resources to help educate patients about NC HealthConnex and how to use this new tool. There will be more information on those opportunities to come. The process can take several months depending on the technical configuration requirements. During that time, we will keep you apprised of the status of this project. If you have any questions, contact the clinical practice manager Darlene Steele at 336-251-1180 ext. 135.