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## Survey Finds Privacy and Security Key Barriers to Interoperability



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The exchange of health information between hospitals and other provider organisations could result in more efficient delivery of care. A new survey, however, finds that security and data privacy issues continue to pose a big challenge in [promoting interoperability in healthcare](#). The survey was conducted by the Trusted Network Accreditation Program (TNAP) collaborative, established to directly align with the development of the USA's 21st Century Cures Act and the Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement (TEFCA).

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Survey results show that the vast majority of respondents (95%) "agree or strongly agree" that electronic sharing of patient data will lead to a more effective and efficient care delivery system. However, 81% of respondents cite that one of the barriers to interoperability in healthcare has been concern from potential network participants for the [privacy and security of patient data](#) after it leaves their organisation.

"Overwhelmingly, survey respondents indicated that improving the electronic movement of health information will improve patient care," said Lee Barrett, Executive Director and CEO of [EHNAC](#), one of the organisations that leads the initiative. "However, the vast majority of potential network participants signalled that if privacy and security concerns are not addressed, interoperability may not be achieved."

EHNAC, a non-profit standards development organisation, provides accreditation for organisations that electronically exchange healthcare information. EHNAC, in collaboration with WEDI, SAFE-BioPharma Association, LLC, eHI, and eP3 Foundation, established TNAP in May 2018. TNAP provides third-party review with accreditation for Trusted Exchange participants, addressing existing security and privacy compliance mandates, and rights management, as well as compliance with new TEFCA regulatory requirements.

Other key findings of the [TNAP-led survey](#) include:

- 84% of respondents agree or strongly agree that privacy and security certification/accreditation is a viable method to **assure trust between Health Information Network participants**.
- 62% of respondents agree or strongly agree that one of the barriers to provider support of more widespread data exchange has been the perceived inconsistent level of privacy and security with other data exchange participants.

"It is vital that key healthcare industry stakeholders collaborate and place a dedicated focus on improving the current state of interoperability," Barrett pointed out. "The findings of this survey indicate that the healthcare industry sees tremendous value in privacy and security accreditation, as well as the necessity to improve the exchange of secure electronic information to facilitate improved patient care."

The EHNAC criteria for each of its accreditation programmes establishes foundational requirements for measuring an organisation's ability to meet federal and state healthcare reform mandates such as HIPAA, Omnibus, ARRA/HITECH, ACA and other mandates for covered entities and business associates focusing on the areas of **privacy, security, confidentiality, best practices, procedures and assets**.

Source: [EHNAC - Electronic Healthcare Network Accreditation Commission](#)

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