
Verizon Aiding Electronic Health Data Sharing in US



In January Verizon will begin to issue free medical identity credentials to 2.3 million U.S. physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners. At present, there is no universal means of issuing multi-factored credentials to U.S. healthcare professionals for use in accessing any healthcare system, database or application. Verizon is taking the first to help healthcare professionals meet federal requirements of the 2009 HITECH Act, which calls for the use of strong identity credentials when accessing and sharing patient information electronically.

The identity credentials will enable U.S. providers to receive digital health information via the Verizon Medical Data Exchange, using a secure, private inbox accessed from a new Web-based physician portal, the Healthcare Provider Portal. These multi-factored credentials will be designed to meet the Level Three authentication requirements created by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the federal agency that works with industry to develop and apply technology, measurements and standards.

In addition, these credentials will be able to be used to universally access healthcare IT applications and platforms, such as electronic medical records, e-prescribing services and health information exchanges, including the Verizon Health Information Exchange, which serves as a central repository for patient information and upon request pulls a patient's history from disparate sources, enabling clinicians to better coordinate care and reducing administrative costs.

"For years, the U.S. has been talking about the concept of digitally sharing health information and we are now on the cusp of making this a reality," said Peter Tippet, vice president, innovation and technology at Verizon Business. "Verizon is lowering the barriers to compliance and adoption by providing healthcare professionals with a universal means to access virtually any system, anytime, anywhere. We believe this is a significant step forward for health IT."

Published on : Thu, 18 Nov 2010