



What is Direct Messaging?

Direct messaging is secure email for exchanging health information – a simple, cost effective mechanism to transport patients’ protected health information (PHI) to known, trusted recipients over the internet. Specifically, Direct messaging functions like a regular email with additional security measures to ensure that messages are only accessible to the intended recipient(s), consistent with the protections required by HIPAA.

One of the most important reasons to use Direct messaging is to have the ability exchange patient information between providers, such for referrals, or to receive real-time notifications when your patients are admitted to/discharged from any of Rhode Island’s acute care hospitals via [CurrentCare Hospital Alerts, Care Management Alerts and Facility-Identified Alerts](#).

Direct messaging services are provided through many certified EHR Vendors, and also by stand-alone Health Information Service Providers (HISPs). Some of the features provided through Direct messaging include:

- Direct compliant email, including message encryption and identity verification
- Web-based mail clients, available from any internet connected computer
- Integration of Direct messaging accounts with email clients like Microsoft Outlook
- Custom integration with EHRs
- Multiple options for personalizing Direct messaging addresses with your practice or organization name

What is DirectTrust?

DirectTrust provides an added layer of security and trust-in-identity operating behind the scenes. This makes Direct exchange of messages and attachments suitable for electronic sharing of personal health information (PHI), which HIPAA requires must remain private and confidential at all times. DirectTrust has created a “trust framework” that extends use of Direct exchange to over 106,000 health care organizations and 1,582,373 Direct addresses/accounts. This trust framework supports both provider-to-provider Direct exchange and bi-directional exchange between consumers/patients and their providers.



How to Get a Direct Email Account:

1. Read more about Direct and DirectTrust and what it does [here](#).
2. Call your EHR Vendor representative to inquire about fees for obtaining a Direct email account(s).
3. You may also wish to compare prices by contacting one or two independent HISPs. RIQI has recommended both [Inpriva](#) and [MaxMD](#) to our practices.