



Digital Bridge

Origin Story

Electronic health records hold tremendous promise for public health objectives. In theory, lab and case reporting, combined with test ordering and results, should make health data instantly (and securely) accessible by both providers and agencies.

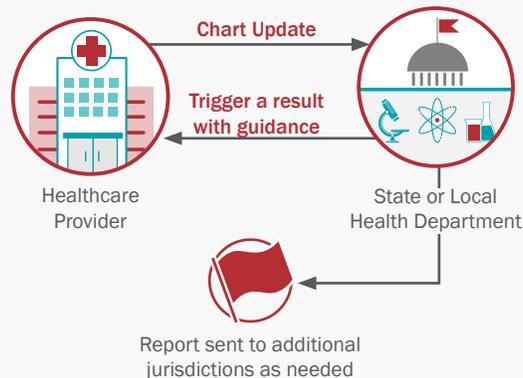
However, practice has not lived up to theory. That's sparked a massive collaboration of healthcare providers, health tech companies and public health agencies to form Digital Bridge. Their goal: harness the true potential of electronic health records to improve public health surveillance.

How It Works

Digital Bridge's electronic initial case reporting (eICR) project worked with eight jurisdictions around the country and sought to automate the case notification of reportable conditions to public health, and trigger response needs back to the provider with result reports. The new approach enabled eICR to automatically flag reportable disease cases and create new case reports in real-time.

As an incubator, Digital Bridge used the eight test cases to gather user feedback, design technical infrastructure and get buy-in from stakeholders. These efforts helped lay the foundation for an eventual nationwide rollout.

The eICR use case has since been passed from Digital Bridge to CDC, APHL and the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists, who are continuing to develop tools to facilitate the instant exchange of eICR between providers and public health agencies.



Additional Reading

[Building a Digital Bridge](#)
Lab Matters Fall 2017

[Digital Bridge](#)

Digital Bridge Partners

- Allscripts
- Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL)
- Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)
- Cerner
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE)
- Deloitte
- eClinical Works
- Epic
- Kaiser Permanente
- Meditech
- National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)
- Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC)
- Partners Healthcare
- Park Nicollet Health
- Public Health Informatics Institute (PHII)

COVID-19 Response

Patient data moving from healthcare providers to public health agencies is typically de-identified to ensure patient privacy. But agencies need contact and demographic information for any patients that test positively for COVID-19 to perform contact tracing and track the spread of the virus.

APHL has worked with CDC to update the Digital Bridge technology so case reports could move automatically to health agencies while keeping patient data secure. This process eliminates the need for epidemiologists to spend precious time tracking down patient data while helping public health agencies pinpoint the virus's location and populations that are most at-risk.

www.aphl.org/COVID19-data

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