

## HealthInfoNet Strategic Plan January 2024 through December 2025

*To create better, easier, and safer solutions is our guiding principle. We help our communities create lasting system-wide improvements in the value of patient care and population health.*

## Executive Summary

The Strategic Plan document presented here is an update to our [previous 18-month plan](#), which was effective from January 2022 through June 2023. The focus of our most recent strategic planning efforts, which began in September 2023, was to modify our core priorities and objectives in alignment with the current healthcare ecosystem and HealthInfoNet’s expanding role with the State of Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

To do this work, we hired an outside firm, Health Resources in Action (HRiA), to create and facilitate a convening and engagement process with our staff, Leadership team, and Board of Directors. This effort included three full-day retreats, as well as various conversations with stakeholders located both in Maine and nationally.

The information collected through this process was used to develop HealthInfoNet’s revised priority areas for the next 24 months (January 2024 through December 2025). At the conclusion of this plan’s timeframe, we will determine whether we should revisit our priorities or if updates to the existing plan are still meaningful.

Our Strategic Plan is organized by “Priority Area,” and further by each area’s overarching “Goal” and core “Objectives.” The plan is meant to be a dynamic, evolving, and iterative document that HealthInfoNet staff, Leadership, and Board can update annually and monitor progress of routinely. It is also meant to be public facing. Our accomplishments to date and our future successes are based on trust and transparency. As we grow, it becomes even more imperative that our stakeholders, partners, and consumers/patients understand our role in their communities.

The document is intentionally brief; it is not meant to be a treatise on HealthInfoNet’s work, but rather a forward projection of our strategic priorities and view of how we will continue to be a trusted convener, innovative thinker, reliable technology services partner, and, ultimately, an organization that has a measurable impact on improving the value and quality of patient care while also making lasting improvements in population health.

Thank you for reading this important document and we look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,



Shaun T. Alfreds  
Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer  
HealthInfoNet

## Overview

### *About HealthInfoNet*

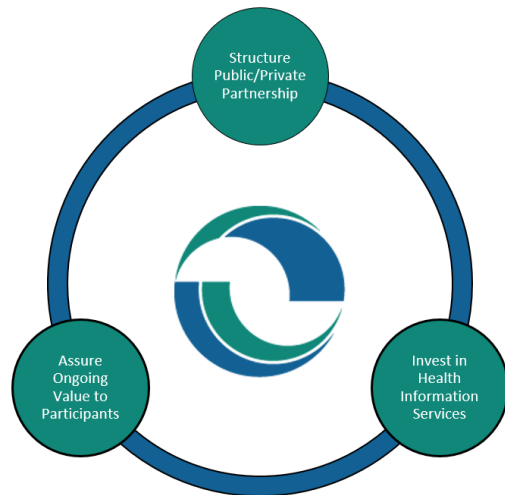
HealthInfoNet is an independent, nonprofit information services organization that manages the statewide Health Information Exchange (HIE) in Maine. The statewide HIE is designed to link an individual's health information from unaffiliated healthcare sites to create a single electronic health record, allowing authorized providers across the state to better support and coordinate patient care.

### *Mission Statement*

To support the healthcare community in creating lasting improvements in the value and quality of patient care and population health.

### *Vision Statement*

To be a trusted information services leader and partner within the healthcare community by helping improve health outcomes through independent convening of stakeholders, timely access to data resources, and deployment of innovative solutions.



### *Terminology Definitions*

In strategic planning exercises, organizations often use various terminology to develop their work plans. Understanding how HealthInfoNet has decided to define these terminologies is critically important in knowing how best to read and learn from our Strategic Plan document. Those concepts include:

- **Priorities** – Overarching domains that are critical for us to achieve our mission.
- **Goals** – Action statements that define the desired outcomes of our priorities.
- **Objectives** – Targeted, measurable focus areas that are designed to help achieve our goals.
- **Strategies** – Specific functions and processes intended to achieve our objectives.

For the purposes of this document, all but Strategies are included. Strategies are internal, operational devices that evolve and expand as new opportunities arise and use cases emerge, for which we will share specific updates as we continue our work and efforts.

## Priority #1: Structure the HIE's Long-Term Public/Private Partnership

Since our founding in 2006, we have demonstrated our value as a trusted innovator and reliable resource of health information technology for both public and private sectors. Increasingly referred to as a “health data utility” within the HIE industry, our interoperability services embrace and support non-traditional, data-driven partnerships across multiple communities – from state public health agencies and local governments to healthcare and community-based delivery system providers. This broadened and diverse role creates opportunities for HealthInfoNet to enhance the value of patient care and population health, and as such is a primary driver of our organization’s ongoing sustainability.

*Goal:* Maximize resiliency and mitigate risk as an agile private partner by continuing to strengthen a trusted private/public partnership that demonstrates high value to diverse stakeholders.

*Objectives:* The following objectives have been designed to help achieve our goal of structuring the HIE’s long-term public/private partnership:

1. **Achieve long-term contract approval of Operational Advance Planning Documentation (OAPD) funding to receive enhanced federal match for the statewide HIE.** CMS approved the OAPD application submitted by the Office of MaineCare Services (OMS) to receive significant operational funding in support of Maine’s statewide HIE on September 26, 2023. The State has approved match funding from August 9, 2024 through September 30, 2025. However, for the full funding amount to be realized in the long term, the State and HealthInfoNet must collaboratively develop a means to fully fund the State-match requirement by October 2025. This will require a new participant fee structure and ultimately changes to our Participation Agreement and State-related contracts. This effort, if successful, will allow us to reduce participant fees for most HIE-participating organizations in 2026.
2. **Support at least one new project and/or partnership with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) annually that leverages the statewide HIE’s services and/or data sets in ways that may also benefit additional stakeholders.** As our priorities increasingly align with those of Maine DHHS, we must continue to demonstrate the statewide HIE’s value as a core data utility in support of emerging health delivery system reform projects and partnerships. Diversifying the use case of our health information services in collaboration with Maine DHHS will naturally result in coordinated and mutually beneficial outcomes for all HIE stakeholders invested in improving the health and wellness of our communities.
3. **Develop an enterprise risk management (ERM) plan aligned with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) that captures the HIE’s value for diverse stakeholders.** A core element of a mature health information services organization is an ERM plan that incorporates organizational, procedural, and systematic risk management functions. While these plans are currently in place, they are not compiled within a centralized structure. Over the next 24 months as we expand our relationship with the State and re-base our financial and institutional relationships with participants, it will be critically important to assure our organizational resilience and dependability.

## Priority #2: Assure the HIE's Ongoing Value to Participants

To continue to serve as a trusted health information services leader and partner within Maine's healthcare community, we must demonstrate ongoing commitment and dedication to developing innovative partnerships, strategic value propositions, and sustainable business models for our participants and key stakeholders. In an ever-evolving healthcare landscape, we must continue to grow and diversify our value offerings in alignment with national and statewide interests while simultaneously tailored to each participant's unique needs.

*Goal:* Serve as a trusted partner to participants in the delivery and effective use of complementary, whole-person (i.e., equitable) information services and data sets to inform decisions impacting patient care, operations, and strategy.

*Objectives:* The following objectives have been designed to help achieve our goal of assuring the HIE's ongoing value to participants:

1. **Introduce an à-la-carte service delivery strategy that identifies add-on offerings beyond the HIE's standard subscription.** As we develop innovative health information services to support evolving patient care and population health workflows, it is important to recognize that not all participants leverage our services in the same way nor to the same extent. To provide a fair and responsive approach to participant fees, while still meeting our operational needs, we will look to update the fee model that establishes a standard subscription inclusive of core services with the option for participants to purchase add-ons to meet specific service needs.
2. **Support participants in obtaining insights from the HIE's services and data sets to help inform health delivery system reform efforts.** As we engaged our participants through additional training and education opportunities over the last 18 months, we learned that our role in the effective delivery of the HIE's health information services needs to be more than just providing a review of our toolkit and its technical implementation. Participants are increasingly requesting more detailed clinical interpretation of data sets and curated recommendations on how to efficiently operationalize systems to effect change in their healthcare delivery strategies.
3. **Promote greater standardization of the core data sets received among participants to establish a consistent threshold of completeness, validity, and reliability of available information.** Key to maintaining our trust, reliability, and value as a data utility is in ensuring that our participants share a common, foundational data set of critical patient health information. By defining a minimal required data set, participant end users will have greater confidence in accessing the statewide HIE for all of their health information needs without the concern of relying on incomplete information to inform time-sensitive decisions.
4. **Integrate and make available Medicare member eligibility and claims information within the HIE's services and data sets for use among participants.** In a state where nearly half of the population is on Medicaid and/or Medicare health insurance, it's important for Maine's statewide HIE to complement its already robust clinical and Medicaid eligibility/claims data warehouse by obtaining Medicare eligibility and claims information for members receiving care throughout the state. Tracking healthcare utilization, predictive risk, and quality measurement across Maine's Medicare and dual-eligible populations will provide new opportunities for HIE stakeholders to forecast, plan, and implement actions to improve the health of the state's aging population.

### Priority #3: Invest in the HIE's Health Information Services

As we explore new business models, revenue sources, and value propositions, we must continue to enhance existing and create new health information services for our stakeholders. Investment in such efforts not only allows us to modernize already effective solutions to better align with emerging workflows and technologies, but also to innovate and produce cutting-edge solutions that forecast future deficiencies in critical patient care and population health functions.

**Goal:** Apply current and emerging health information interoperability standards to promote tighter integration of the HIE's services and data sets within participants' native data systems and workflows.

**Objectives:** The following objectives have been designed to help achieve our goal of investing in the HIE's health information services:

- 1. Identify and develop managed services that can be delivered to participants using a FHIR-based Application Programming Interface (API) framework.** One of our core responsibilities as a health information services partner is to adapt and advance with our clients' data infrastructure needs and interoperability regulations. To continue to provide value to existing and prospective clients over time, we must continue to apply leading interoperability standards, such as the FHIR API framework, to our health information services to most flexibly support evolving workflows, enhance patient care, and optimize future use cases.
- 2. Expand the HIE's participation and/or services regionally to at least four new organizations based outside of Maine.** While we continue to deliver on our mission, an important opportunity presents itself to expand our participation network beyond our borders to healthcare organizations and public health agencies in need of a robust health information services toolkit. Building our connections outside of Maine means that new use cases and workflows will be considered in the expansion and enhancement of the services we offer back home.
- 3. Explore the expansion of the HIE's services and data sets to include whole-person information.** Building on ongoing stakeholder engagement efforts and statewide conversations focused on the value of bridging clinical and community health information systems, we will pursue expanding the HIE's capacity as a data aggregator by incorporating health equity information available from our clinical and social services participants into our health information services.
- 4. Leverage relationship with Maine DHHS to collect behavioral health treatment information for use by Maine DHHS offices/divisions in addressing statewide behavioral health needs.** Expanding the collection, use, and disclosure of behavioral health data within the statewide HIE is vitally important to allow our healthcare community to support whole-person care. It is expected that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) will soon publish its final rule implementing the changes to the CARES Act passed by Congress in 2020, which will align 42 CFR Part 2's rules more closely with HIPAA's privacy rules.
- 5. Strengthen the integration of the HIE's services and data sets within participants' native systems and workflows by expanding and promoting the use of the Clinical Portal *InContext* service.** The Clinical Portal *InContext* service enables participant end users to view their patients' statewide HIE records through a seamless, embedded experience within their organizations' native electronic health record (EHR) systems. Implementations of the service within participants' EHR systems to date has proven an effective means of ensuring improved usage and understanding of the HIE's data sets and services.

## Closing Statements

This Strategic Plan sets HealthInfoNet in pursuit of a vision of continued growth as a leader and partner in delivering needed health information utility services with both public and private sector stakeholders in the state of Maine and articulates the necessary groundwork to achieve these critical priorities, goals, and objectives that our staff, Leadership, and Board will set out to accomplish over the next 24 months. We believe that it is time to expand our thinking, explore new opportunities, and determine how we can do more while maintaining our core mission. We look forward to collaborating with existing and new clients and partners to discover what's to come for our organization, as well as to continue providing top-tier health information services that improve the value and quality of patient care and population health.

Should you have any questions, comments, or feedback for us related to this plan or the activities described herein, please reach out to us at any time. The following points of contact are ready to assist depending on your area of interest:

- For engagement and partnership opportunities: [Delaney Paterson, Client Engagement Manager](#)
- For training and education opportunities: [Nicole Yeo-Fisher, Clinical Education Manager](#)