



The State of Maine is poised and ready for February 1, 2008. On that date the state's health care leaders will begin an ambitious and exciting project: the development of one of the United State's first statewide "health information exchange." Non-profit venture [HealthInfoNet](#), the group spearheading the effort, has retained [3M](#) and [Orion Health](#) to assist on the technology end of the equation.

Bernie Monegain, editor of Healthcare IT News, brings us a [synopsis of the plan](#):

"This project will be big and far-reaching - touching the lives of more than half of Maine's population," said David Howes, MD, vice chairman of HealthInfoNet and president and CEO of Martin's Point Health Care.

Wendy Wolf, MD, president and CEO of the Maine Health Access Foundation, said she and her colleagues view HealthInfoNet as a key way to provide better care for both insured and uninsured patients in the state. Uninsured patients tend to receive the least coordinated care, she noted.

[...]

Beginning this winter, more than 2,000 healthcare providers, including 15 rural and urban hospitals across Maine and one-third of practicing physicians in Maine, will join with the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (part of the Department of Health and Human Services) in a 24-month pilot of the new network.

Monegain says that once the network is launched across the state, network officials project an approximate \$50 million reduction in healthcare costs due to the reduction in unneeded and duplicate testing, procedures, and hospital admissions.

HealthInfoNet makes possible a consolidated electronic health record that combines data usually kept in separate physical locations such as labs, private health care providers, hospitals, etc. As the program develops it should also provide individuals with a much greater level of access to their own personal health records.

SOURCE: ["Maine begins to build statewide HIE" 01/16/08](#)

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