



NATIONAL  
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EXCHANGE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **NATE, DirectTrust and EHNAC Agree That Consumer Access to Data is Critical Next Step in the Future of Interoperable Health IT**

*In Case You Missed It...*

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 14, 2016)** – On Sunday, April 10, 2016, the [National Association for Trusted Exchange](#) (NATE), [DirectTrust](#) and the [Electronic Healthcare Network Accreditation Commission](#) (EHNAC) – all organizations with a focus on the success of Direct secure messaging – joined together to talk about interoperability in healthcare. In a pre-conference workshop affiliated with the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual [World Health Care Congress](#), the three organizations presented from three very different perspectives on “The Demand for Secure Interoperable Health Information Exchange: Options and Opportunities 2016,” creating a dynamic that echoed the recurring theme of the complementary nature of the organizations’ work.

Dr. David Kibbe, President and CEO of DirectTrust, led the day with a discussion of the factors and players involved in interoperability in healthcare, including some predictions on the future expansion and contraction of various networks. Lee Barrett, Executive Director of EHNAC, focused his comments on the potential security risks involved in interoperability and the importance of maintaining a risk management strategy. Aaron Seib, CEO of NATE, talked about the critical role of the patient in any interoperable exchange of personal health data. Renee Smith, Global Director of IT Enterprise Planning and Portfolio Management, Walgreens Boots Alliance, ably facilitated the discussion, and Paul Uhrig, EVP, Chief Administrative, Legal & Privacy Officer, Surescripts, provided insightful wrap-up commentary.

By the end of the day, much had been discussed about how to measure interoperability, the degree to which security should be a deciding factor in sharing health data, and the role of providers and others in educating patients about their rights to their own information and the various methods available to them to get that information electronically. While all three organizations brought very different outlooks and offerings to the discussion, the day signaled a renewed sense of collaboration and understanding that the organizations each have a complementary role to play in the success of Direct as a method of securely transporting confidential information. Further, it was clear that all three organizations see patient involvement as critical to the path forward.

Some quotes from the day:

Paul Uhrig, EVP, Chief Administrative, Legal & Privacy Officer, Surescripts: “The Federal investment in HIT has certainly been a driver of demand of the technologies that many providers are using, but in the future it is likely we’ll see increased consumer engagement and demand, and that very much will drive different and increased demand for interoperability.”

Lee Barrett, Executive Director, EHNAC: “Today’s patients are much more informed and are a lot smarter on the existing capabilities available for managing their own health. As these consumer tools

continue to advance, resolving interoperability challenges across healthcare stakeholders and their products will need to remain a top priority.”

Aaron Seib, CEO, NATE: “Ultimately, the consumer is the only person who is a part of every encounter that they have. And if they are going to have 100% information awareness to share with their next provider and to participate and actually partner with all their caregivers, not just the ones that are in the HIEs, not just the ones that are using a particular EMR, but every provider that they’re going to get care from , we have to enable them to get data in the app of their choice...”

David Kibbe, MD, MBA, President and CEO, DirectTrust: “I do think there is great potential, and things might happen very fast. This idea of a shared medical record, that is in the control of the individual, that literally drives patients in a different way through the medical system, could emerge almost overnight.”

Renee Smith, Global Director of IT Enterprise Planning and Portfolio Management, Walgreens Boots Alliance: “I look forward to the day, and the day is coming, when the patient or consumer has that empowerment and that technology and the appropriate security... If that’s not why we’re all here, then we’re in the wrong place at the wrong time, because that is what success will look like.”

Aaron Seib: “I think we as a nation have been working on the right priorities, in the right order: make this work for doctors, make the data available to consumers, let the consumers decide how to use that data. I believe that three years from now, we’ll see the portion of the population that is most burdened by disease using tools to better manage their care and better partner with their doctors. The key to get from here to there is not to wait for the perfect solution that satisfies everyone that may never come.”

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***About National Association for Trusted Exchange***

The [National Association for Trusted Exchange](#) (NATE) is a not-for-profit membership association focused on enabling trusted exchange among organizations and individuals with differing regulatory environments and exchange preferences. NATE brings the expertise of its membership and other stakeholders together to find common solutions that optimize the appropriate exchange of health information for greater gains in technology adoption and improvement of patient outcomes. Consistent with NATE’s mission to address the legal, policy and technical barriers that inhibit health information exchange between data holders and healthcare consumers, NATE leads and participates in a number of ongoing and emerging projects focused on exchange via multiple modes of transport, including Direct secure messaging and APIs. NATE’s [Blue Button for Consumers](#) (NBB4C) Trust Bundle provides a technical solution to establishing scalable trust among organizations using Direct secure messaging to exchange protected health information between HIPAA covered entities and the consumers that they serve. The NBB4C includes the trust anchors of multiple consumer-facing applications (CFAs) that have elected to adopt a common set of policies and practices that enable consumer mediated health information exchange while upholding

personal privacy preferences. Stakeholders interested in participating in NATE's work to support consumer mediated exchange should consider [NATE membership](#) or subscribe to *News from NATE* on the NATE website at <http://nate-trust.org>.

### ***About DirectTrust***

DirectTrust is a four-year-old, non-profit, competitively neutral, self-regulatory entity created by and for participants in the Direct community, including Health Internet Service Providers (HISPs), Certificate Authorities (CAs), and Registration Authorities (RAs), doctors, patients and vendors, and supports both provider-to-provider as well as patient-to-provider Direct exchange. DirectTrust received a Cooperative Agreement Award from ONC as part of the Exemplar HIE Governance Program that was in place from March 2013 to March 2015. DirectTrust serves as a forum and governance body for persons and entities engaged in Direct exchange of electronic health information as part of the Nationwide Health Information Network (NwHIN). DirectTrust's Security and Trust Framework is the basis for the voluntary accreditation of service providers implementing Direct Messaging of health information. The goal of DirectTrust is to develop, promote and, as necessary, help enforce the rules and best practices necessary to maintain security and trust within the Direct community, consistent with the HITECH Act and the governance rules for the NwHIN established by ONC. DirectTrust is committed to fostering widespread public confidence in the exchange of Direct Messaging of health information. To learn more, visit [www.directtrust.org](http://www.directtrust.org).

### ***About EHNAC***

The Electronic Healthcare Network Accreditation Commission (EHNAC) is a voluntary, self-governing standards development organization (SDO) established to develop standard criteria and accredit organizations that electronically exchange healthcare data. These entities include accountable care organizations, cloud-enabled services, data registries, electronic health networks, EPCS vendors, eprescribing solution providers, financial services firms, health information exchanges, health information service providers, management service organizations, medical billers, outsourced service providers, payers, practice management system vendors and third-party administrators.

EHNAC was founded in 1993 and is a tax-exempt 501(c)(6) nonprofit organization. Guided by peer evaluation, the EHNAC accreditation process promotes quality service, innovation, cooperation and open competition in healthcare. To learn more, visit [www.ehnac.org](http://www.ehnac.org), contact [info@ehnac.org](mailto:info@ehnac.org), or follow us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

### ***About Surescripts***

Surescripts is committed to unleashing the potential of American healthcare by creating a more connected and collaborative healthcare system. Our nationwide health information network connects doctor's offices, hospitals, pharmacists, and health plans through an integrated and technology neutral platform. For more information, go to [www.surescripts.com](http://www.surescripts.com) and follow us at [twitter.com/surescripts](https://twitter.com/surescripts).

### ***About Walgreens Boots Alliance***

Walgreens Boots Alliance (Nasdaq: WBA) is the first global pharmacy-led, health and wellbeing enterprise.

The company was created through the combination of Walgreens and Alliance Boots in December 2014, bringing together two leading companies with iconic brands, complementary geographic footprints, shared values and a heritage of trusted health care services through pharmaceutical wholesaling and community pharmacy care, dating back more than 100 years.

Walgreens Boots Alliance is the largest retail pharmacy, health and daily living destination in the USA and Europe and, together with its equity method investments\*, employs more than 370,000\* people and has a presence in more than 25\* countries. Walgreens Boots Alliance is a global leader in pharmacy-led, health and wellbeing retail with over 13,100\* stores in 11\* countries. The company includes one of the largest global pharmaceutical wholesale and distribution networks with over 350\* distribution centers delivering to more than 200,000\*\* pharmacies, doctors, health centers and hospitals each year in 19\* countries. In addition, Walgreens Boots Alliance is one of the world's largest purchasers of prescription drugs and many other health and wellbeing products.

The company's portfolio of retail and business brands includes Walgreens, Duane Reade, Boots and Alliance Healthcare, as well as increasingly global health and beauty product brands, such as No7, Botanics, Liz Earle and Soap & Glory. More company information is available at [www.walgreensbootsalliance.com](http://www.walgreensbootsalliance.com).