



## U.S. Health Dept. Picks Companies To Test National Health Information Highway

Nine regional health information networks were awarded \$22.5 million in contracts to begin trials on exchanging health data.

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In a step toward creating a national health information highway, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has awarded nine regional health information networks with contracts to begin trial exchanges of **data**.

The nine contracts totaling \$22.5 million were awarded to a range of local and state health data exchanges. Together, the exchanges will create the National Health Information **Network** Collaborative, which will test and demonstrate how private and secure patient data can be electronically shared among health-care providers, patients, and other stakeholders across communities.

These trials among the regional exchanges will serve as a model for how a national health data network could work, said a spokeswoman for the Indiana Health Information Exchange, one of the regional health information organizations, or RHIOs, awarded a \$2.5 million contract to participate in the collaborative trial.

The other regional organizations awarded HHS contracts to participate in the trial collaborative are CareSpark, which includes three cities in eastern Tennessee and southwestern Virginia; the Delaware Health Information Network; Long Beach Network For Health in Long Beach and Los Angeles, Calif.; Lovelace Clinic Foundation in New Mexico; MedVirginia in central Virginia; New York eHealth Collaborative; North Carolina Healthcare Information and Communications Alliance; and the West Virginia Health Information Network.