

# Conversation Starter: Culture, Trust, & HIE



Health  
Choice

Culture shapes what people value, how they make decisions, who they trust, and how they communicate. These factors influence how patients view health, privacy, and technology—including whether they feel comfortable sharing their health information electronically.

As a provider, you play a key role in building trust with patients. By listening with empathy, using plain language, and respecting cultural preferences, you can help patients feel informed, safe, and in control. Technology alone isn't enough—trust in you and the system makes the difference.

This guide is designed to help you have respectful, culturally sensitive conversations about HIE, tailored to each patient's language, literacy level, and lived experience.

## Communication Checklist

- Start with empathy: "I want to understand what matters to you about privacy."
- Ask open-ended questions to learn about preferences and concerns: Encourage questioning and use of the teach-back method.
- Offer choice and control: Emphasize opt-out options and the ability to limit sharing.
- Recognize context: Ask about past experiences with healthcare, government, or law enforcement that may affect trust.
- Support access: Offer interpreters and translated materials. Use plain language.

## Conversation Starters

- "I want to make sure you get the best care. We share important health information with other providers to help with that."
- "Have you heard of a system that lets your providers share medical records securely?"
- "Would you like me to explain how it works?"
- "What do you know about how your health information is used?"

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is HIE?

*HIE is a secure electronic system that lets your doctors, specialists, pharmacists, and hospitals share health information, so you get safer, faster, and more coordinated care.*

### Is my data safe?

*Yes. We use strong security and follow privacy laws like HIPAA.*

### Do I have a choice?

*Yes. You can opt out or limit what's shared.*

### Why do I need this?

*It helps your care team coordinate, so you get the right care faster.*

### What are the benefits?

*Faster info for pharmacists and plan staff, immediate access to allergies and conditions, and basic benefits such as avoiding repeated tests, speeding treatment, and keeping all providers on the same page.*

### Is my information secure and private?

*Yes. Access is logged and regulated; providers can only view records for care. Only registered providers involved in your care can see your information; laws protect it.*