

Alaska HIE Modernizes IT Infrastructure with NextGate and AWS



About healtheConnect Alaska

healtheConnect Alaska is a leading HIE providing direct secure messaging and data sharing services to over 500 participants, including AARP Alaska, Premera Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alaska, Providence Health System, and the State of Alaska's Department of Health & Social Services.

"Accurate, longitudinal data that flows across boundaries is a catalyst for informed decision making and effective care management," said Bill Pearch, healtheConnect's Chief Information Officer. "With NextGate and AWS, we are able to collect, store and share data more easily, giving our providers meaningful, real-time insights to deliver the high-quality care every Alaskan deserves."

Executive Summary

As a key enabler of health information exchange and coordinated care across the state, healtheConnect Alaska provides direct secure messaging and data sharing services to more than 500 HIE participants.

Fundamental to healtheConnect Alaska's commitment to coordinated, patient-centered care was to create a fully-integrated and sustainable network of accurate, accessible health records. To achieve this goal, the HIE leveraged an automated, cloud-based Enterprise Master Patient Index (EMPI) solution from NextGate and AWS to connect the dots from various stakeholders across the state's technologically diverse environment to improve safety and outcomes, identify gaps of care, reduce operational and administrative inefficiencies, and distinguish opportunities for cost-savings.

The Challenge

The success of any health information exchange hinges on the ability to provide accurate, up-to-date patient data. Like many evolving HIEs, healtheConnect Alaska's need for accurate patient identification grew, in part, due to the rising number of disparate EHR applications and source systems joining the network. Patient data was isolated and incompatible with other IT systems, triggering inaccurate reporting and analytics, duplicate records, administrative burdens, and lost revenue.

As part of its transformational HIE journey toward building a robust, modernized health IT infrastructure, healtheConnect Alaska wanted to implement a vigorous identity management and cross-interoperability strategy to minimize errors, improve efficiencies and provide a consolidated health record for every Alaskan.

healtheConnect Alaska also needed an architecture that could integrate multiple disparate EHRs, and applications into a comprehensive IT environment—without sacrificing accessibility or functionality. Further, the HIE had to ensure its network would remain secure, accessible and available at all times, even in the event of a natural disaster emergency. Additionally, healtheConnect Alaska wanted a solution that could scale to support future growth and seamlessly onboard new providers and data streams including social determinants and behavioral health.

The Solution

To realize its vision of a sustainable, connected network, healtheConnect Alaska needed an enterprise data integration and identity management partner to reconcile patient records across its growing number of

Why Amazon Web Services (AWS)?

As an integral part of NextGate's SaaS-based EMPI, AWS provides healthConnect Alaska an affordable, scalable identity matching solution that orchestrates healthcare data in a highly secure and compliant IT environment.

By hosting its EMPI solution on AWS, healthConnect is able to:

- Bring together the best-of-breed products into a single environment.
- Simplify the technical infrastructure locally to reduce costs, need for hard-to-recruit skillsets.
- Scale and perform without issue.
- Onboard new providers and sources quickly to meet the pace of growth.
- Provide high reliability and security in the event of a natural disaster.



participants and provide on-demand access to patient medical records. To that end, the HIE partnered with NextGate to implement an Enterprise Master Patient Index (EMPI) on AWS. The cloud-based, vendor-agnostic EMPI enables data from multiple sources and locations to be correctly linked to the same individual under an Enterprise Unique Identifier (EUID), eliminating duplicate records and giving network providers a longitudinal view of any given patient. The EUID ensures that applications share the same data on the same person.

The solution provides a centralized location of trusted patient demographics with capabilities that include:

Results and Benefits

Having timely access to longitudinal patient records improves nearly every aspect of care delivery for healthConnect Alaska and its more than 500 providers. Specifically:

- Enhanced clinical decision making, physician productivity and care coordination through automation of patient ID management.
 - Increased confidence in data quality and accuracy.
 - Improved security and compliance posture
 - Reduced infrastructure costs: avoidance of on-prem data centers, servers and storage and associated power, cooling and resources to maintain it.
 - Scalability for "of the moment" and future growth needs to accommodate additional members and cover more patients.
 - Decreased administrative waste re manual look up and record remediation.
 - Heightened support of broader HIE initiatives, i.e. population health, social determinants and patient satisfaction.
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- Comprehensive clean-up and de-duplication of records across the network.
 - Automated, real-time patient record matching across disparate systems and settings of care.
 - Seamless integration of new and existing legacy applications to provide fluid data exchange without sacrificing clinical or administrative workflow.
 - De-identification processes for population-based analytics and quality reporting.

About NextGate

NextGate is the global leader in identity modernization and data transformation in healthcare. With over 100 customers in nine countries, NextGate is revolutionizing the consumer care journey by resolving isolated, unstructured health and lifestyle data and establishing a trusted, single identity across the continuum. Our identity and data integrity solutions connect the digital ecosystem at scale to deliver a unified experience for care providers and their patients. NextGate's market-leading, HITRUST-certified Enterprise Master Person Index (EMPI) is deployed by the world's most progressive health systems, state and government agencies, and health information exchanges for meaningful, data-driven improvements in care quality, safety and delivery.