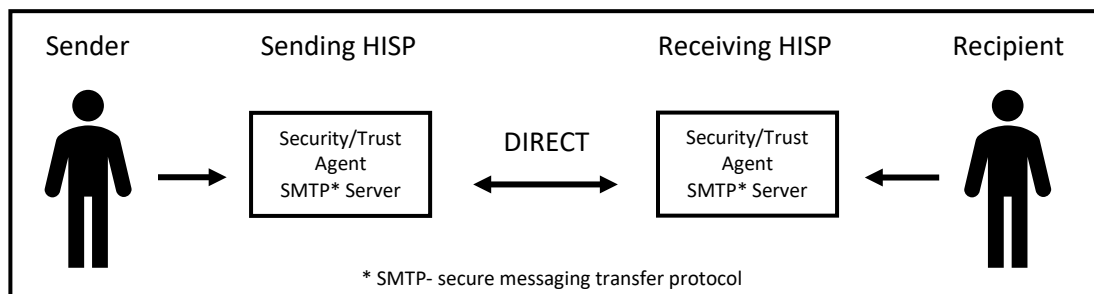


What Is a “Direct Email”?

Direct email is a technical standard for exchanging protected health information (PHI) between healthcare entities (e.g. primary care physicians, specialists, hospitals, clinical labs) in a trusted network. Direct email allows you to send PHI in a secure manner by ensuring that the messages are only accessible to the intended recipient. To implement Direct, the technology vendor will install the functionality that allows for the transmission of the data. Once this is in place, each provider or clinic will need to have a Direct email address assigned to them by specially vetted companies, called Health Internet Service Providers (HISPs). While Direct email accomplishes the same purpose as standard email, there are some important differences:

- Direct email has additional security measures to establish a chain of trust to ensure the privacy and security of PHI. A direct email can only send and receive from other direct emails. You can not use a direct email address with a non-direct email such as Gmail.
- A direct email address can be given to a provider, an organization, or even a specific device.
- Instead of communications being routed through an email provider (like Google), messages are routed through the HISP.

Your HISP can give you access to your Direct email if you do not use an electronic health record (EHR). If you have a need to send PHI securely you can use a Direct email without an EHR, but it will be simpler to send through your EHR.



How do I get one?

You can get one from a variety of sources, including EHR vendors, State Health Information Exchange entities, as well as private service providers who have been approved as a HISP. We recommend starting with your EHR vendor to see if they provide them. If not, they should be able to recommend where you can get one. The tools your EHR vendor gives you may or may not include the word “Direct,” so it is important to have a conversation with your vendor to understand the tools available to you.

Who will need my Direct email?

Anyone to whom you send or from whom you receive PHI will need a secure Direct email. You can obtain this by asking for it.



Have more questions about Direct? **We can help!**

If you are in Alaska, Hawaii, Montana, Wyoming or the US Territories, **contact Mountain Pacific** at:
QualityPaymentHelp@mpqhf.org or visit www.mpqhf.org/QIO/qpp-tools-resources/

If you are in Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah or Washington, **contact Comagine Health** at:
QaulityPaymentProgram@comagine.org or visit www.comagine.org/program/qpp