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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NC HealthConnex Builds Emergency Connections to Neighboring State and Regional HIEs to Improve Access to Patient Records During Hurricane Florence

RALEIGH, NC (September 13, 2018) – In the event the storm forces patients to seek health care outside of their communities, North Carolina's statewide health information exchange -NC HealthConnex - has enabled connectivity to neighboring state and regional HIEs to support access to patient records.

NC HealthConnex opened the gateway for bidirectional query and exchange of patient records via the national eHealth Exchange Network, part of the Sequoia Project, to:
- Coastal Connect HIE (Wilmington, NC)
- ETHIN (East Tennessee)
- GRAChiE (Augusta, Ga.)
- MedVirginia (Richamond, Va.)
- SCHIEX (South Carolina)

Existing connections already in place:
- GaHIN (Atlanta)
- VA HIE (Veterans Administration)

Major disasters such as Hurricane Florence have an effect on health care information needs – even before they make landfall.

"Hurricane Florence has already resulted in the evacuation of millions who left their local area where health care records are housed," said the North Carolina Department of Information Technology's Secretary Eric Boyette. "Our agency has been working to allow exchange of health records across state lines to provide additional support to the providers who will be treating them. We're glad to have a part in making sure people get the best care possible."

Health information exchanges (HIEs) are networks that allow doctors, nurses, pharmacists, other health care providers, and patients to access and securely share a patient's vital medical information electronically such as medications, allergies, procedures, labs, diagnoses, etc.— improving the speed, quality, safety, coordination, and cost of patient care

""Health data is critical during natural disasters," said Yvonne Hughes, CEO of both Coastal Carolinas Health Alliance and Coastal Connect Health Information Exchange. "Our connection with NC HealthConnex helps us provide the best care we can during Hurricane Florence. We'd like to recognize our board, our staff, NC HealthConnex, Medicity, and Orion Health for working so hard to make this connection happen."

"The genesis of health information exchanges was to enable the secure exchange of health care information using technology during emergent situations," said Christie Burris, Executive Director of the NC Health Information Exchange Authority. "Use cases for widespread adoption of this type of technology during emergencies continues to emerge. We are pleased to able support this infrastructure for the State of North Carolina."

During Hurricane Irma, GRAChIE established nine emergent connections in 24 hours to facilitate access to clinically relevant information on any Florida resident that may arrive in Georgia for care. GRAChIE's experience and guidance helped the NC HealthConnex team to implement emergent connections to five HIEs in 48 hours.

For more information, visit www.nchealthconnex.gov.

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ABOUT THE NORTH CAROLINA HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE AUTHORITY
The North Carolina Health Information Exchange Authority (NC HIEA) operates North Carolina's state-operated health information exchange, NC HealthConnex. NC HealthConnex is a secure, standardized electronic system in which providers can share important patient health information. See how it works.

The NC HIEA is committed to its mission: to connect health care providers to safely and securely share health information through a trusted network to improve health care quality and outcomes for North Carolinians. For more information about the NC HIEA visit: https://hiea.nc.gov/about-us/about-nc-hiea.

ABOUT THE N.C. DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
The Department of Information Technology provides Technology services to state agencies and other government customers across North Carolina. Our services include hosting, network, telecommunications, desktop computing, project management services, data analytics and unified communications such as email and calendaring. The department operates under the leadership of the State Chief Information Officer (SCIO), as appointed by the Governor. The State CIO provides direct management over IT operations and has statewide IT responsibilities, including technical architecture, procurement, project management and security.

ABOUT COASTAL CONNECT HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE
Coastal Connect Health Information Exchange (CCHIE) was established in 2009 by hospital stakeholders who deployed HIE technology in 2011 as a way to securely connect unaffiliated ambulatory and acute healthcare providers in southeastern North Carolina for electronic sharing of patient care information to support patient-centric care transition between providers, reduce redundant testing, and realize efficiencies in workflow. CCHIE is governed by a multidisciplinary board composed of representatives from stakeholder hospitals community practices, the state Medicaid management entity, and a community representative. CCHIE's sustainability model is supported by its founding stakeholders as well as ambulatory provider participation fees. Over 7.2 million patient encounters are indexed on the HIE's Patient Search tool which allows HIE participants access to care documents from over 110 acute and

ambulatory data contributors; including lab results, pathology results, radiology results, discharge summaries, encounter information, demographics and CCDs.