

North Carolina enables interstate electronic laboratory report exchange for COVID-19 with Virginia



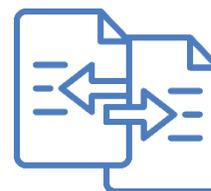
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CATEGORY: **Laboratory Data Exchange**

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) set up automated exchange of electronic laboratory reports (ELR) with Virginia to remove the need for manual faxing.

While someone might seek healthcare outside their home state for any number of reasons, the home state is responsible for taking public health action and for counting cases of reportable disease. When this clinical encounter involves laboratory testing for a reportable condition, the health department in the encounter state typically receives the report and must manually send it to the patient's home state.

There are no systematic nationwide electronic transferring mechanisms, and most jurisdictions use fax machines to reroute reportable lab results. North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) worked with Virginia to set up automated routing of electronic lab reports (ELRs) that can take the place of faxing to exchange these records.



The “What”

DHHS enabled automatic, electronic transfer of ELRs for cases of COVID-19 listing a Virginia address. On receipt of an ELR for a patient identified as a resident of Virginia, that ELR is routed directly to Virginia Department of Health with no manual steps needed.

The “So What”

This ends the manual step of having to print out of jurisdiction cases from the DHHS surveillance system and manually fax them to Virginia.

The “Now What”

DHHS is currently working on exchanging data for all communicable diseases, as well as on developing a process to route a case back out electronically if it is identified as being a resident of Virginia after DHHS has accepted it into their system.



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