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January 16, 2024

RCE Monthly Informational Call

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Agenda

ONC TEFCA RECOGNIZED COORDINATING ENTITY

- **How Will Exchange Work Under TEFCA?**
- **What Are The Components of TEFCA?**
- **TEFCA is Live!**
  - » QHIN Signing Event
  - » ONC Annual Meeting
- **TEFCA is Looking to The Future**
  - » Continued Onboarding
  - » Support of FHIR
  - » New FAQs and Fact Sheets
  - » Forthcoming Documents for Feedback
- **Educational Resources and Upcoming Events**
- **Questions & Answers**

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TEFCA Exchange

How Will Exchange Work Under TEFCA?

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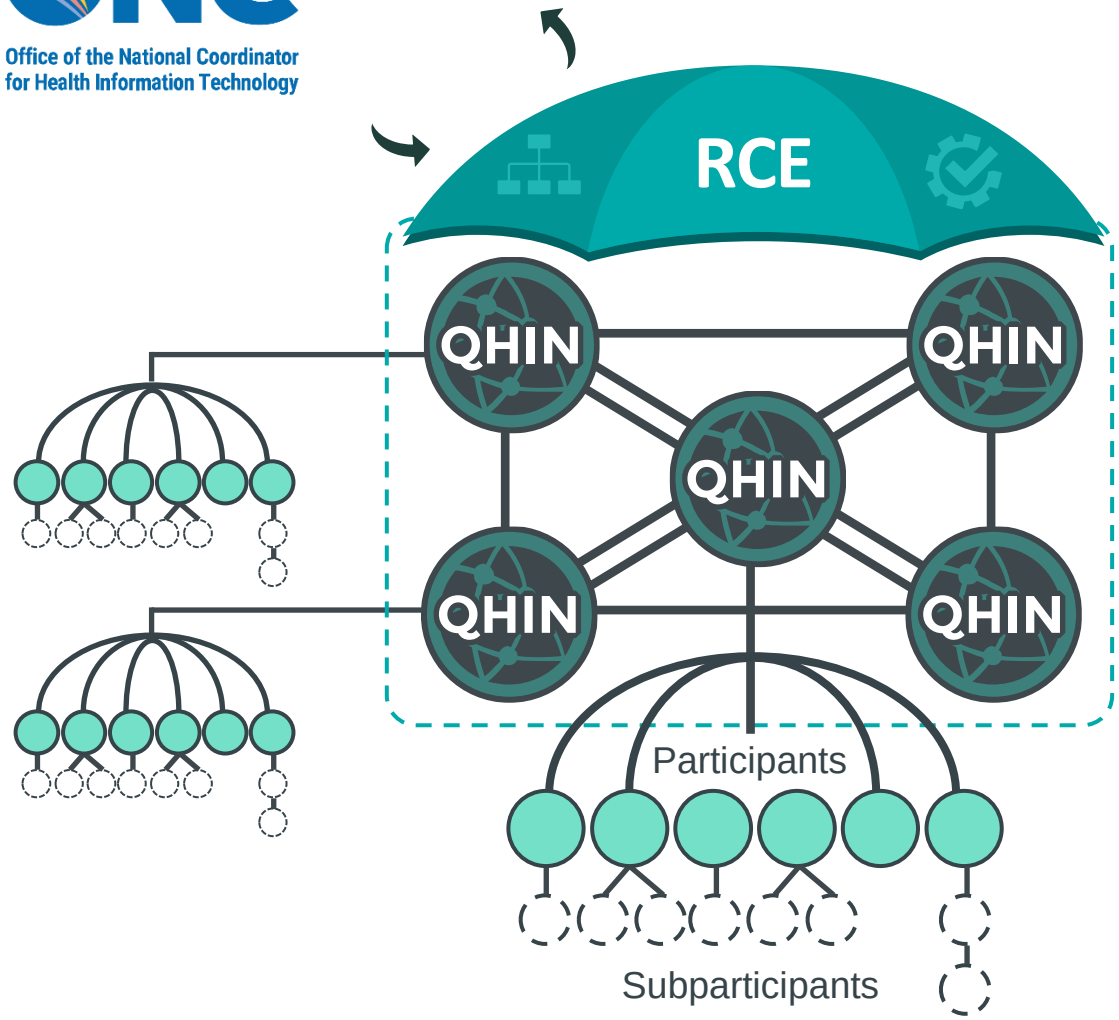
Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology



ONC defines overall policy and certain governance requirements.

RCE provides oversight and governing approach for QHINs.

Qualified Health Information Networks (QHINs) connect directly to each other to facilitate nationwide interoperability.

Each QHIN connects Participants, which connect Subparticipants.

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TEFCA Components

TEFCA Components

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Trusted Exchange Framework

Common Agreement

Standard Operating Procedures

QHIN Technical Framework

QHIN Onboarding

Metrics

Governing Approach

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TEFCA is Live!

Congratulations to Our Newly Designated QHINs™!

eHealth Exchange

KONZA NATIONAL NETWORK

MedAllies

Epic Nexus

HEALTH GORILLA

QHIN Signing Event

Secretary Becerra Hosted Five QHINs and Several Applicant QHINs on December 12th, 2023

The newly designated QHINs include:

- eHealth Exchange
- Epic Nexus
- Health Gorilla
- KONZA National Network
- MedAllies

Federal Agency Support for TEFCA

- **HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra:**
  - "Each and every one of us recognizes that this is one of the main ways, long term, that we're going to bring down the cost of health care…."
  - "This is going to benefit patients. It's going to support providers. It's going to be a boon in the end of the day for health care companies. But most importantly for everyone who has some connection in the healthcare system to health and safety, this takes us to the next level."
- **Dr. Arati Prabhakar, Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the President's Science Advisor**, spoke about the possibilities created by TEFCA, including for improving health outcomes across the country.
- **CMS Principal Deputy Administrator and COO Jonathan Blum** pledged to work with ONC hand-in-hand and pledged to use CMS tools to help support TEFCA.
- **CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky** said, "We have to have a nationwide approach to public health interoperability."
- **Veterans Administration Under Secretary for Health Dr. Shereef Elnahal** spoke to the potential of TEFCA to improve care for veterans and improve the VA's ability to access data in support of its public health mission.

Applicant QHINs include CommonWell Health Alliance, eClinicalWorks, Kno2, and Surescripts Health Information Network.

TEFCA at the ONC Annual Meeting

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ONC 2023 ANNUAL MEETING

REGISTER NOW

Home | Hotel & Accommodations | Agenda

Join Us:

Thursday December 14 and
Friday December 15, 2023

2023 ONC ANNUAL MEETING

REGISTER NOW

[ONC 2023 - Plenary Session: TEFCA Live! A Celebration – Part 1 :: TV Worldwide Events]

New TEFCA Manner Exception under Information Blocking

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Information Blocking Exceptions – TEFCA Manner Exception

- New Exception for Actors and Requestors Capable of Exchange via TEFCA
  - The HTI-1 final rule establishes a "TEFCA Manner" Exception that applies where an actor and requestor are both part of TEFCA. Where the exception is met, an actor's practice of fulfilling certain requests for access, exchange, or use of EHI only via TEFCA will not be considered information blocking. The finalized exception applies only where:
    - the actor and requestor are both part of TEFCA;
    - access, exchange, or use of the requested EHI can be supported via TEFCA for both the actor and requestor;
    - the request for access, exchange or use is not via API standards adopted under the ONC Health IT Certification Program;
    - any fees charged and any licensing of interoperability elements by the actor in relation to fulfilling the request via TEFCA satisfy, respectively, the Fees Exception (§ 171.302) and Licensing Exception (§ 171.303).

Source: HTI-1 Final Rule Overview Information Session #1

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TEFCA is Looking to the Future

TEFCA Evolution

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2016

21st Century Cures
Establishes TEFCA

Jan 2018

ONC releases
TEFCA Draft 1

April 2019

ONC releases
TEFCA Draft 2

Aug 2019

ONC selects **The Sequoia Project as the Recognized Coordinating Entity**

2020-2021

ONC and RCE **Stakeholder engagement**

Aug 2021

RCE and ONC release **draft QTF v1 and Elements of the CA**

Jan 2022

RCE and ONC release **CA v1, QTF v1, and related materials**

Feb 2023

First applications accepted for testing

Dec 2023

Go-live on CA v1.1 and QTF v1.1

Q1 2024

Plan to release CA v2 with Facilitated FHIR and related materials

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QHIN Onboarding Continues

QHIN Application and Onboarding & Designation

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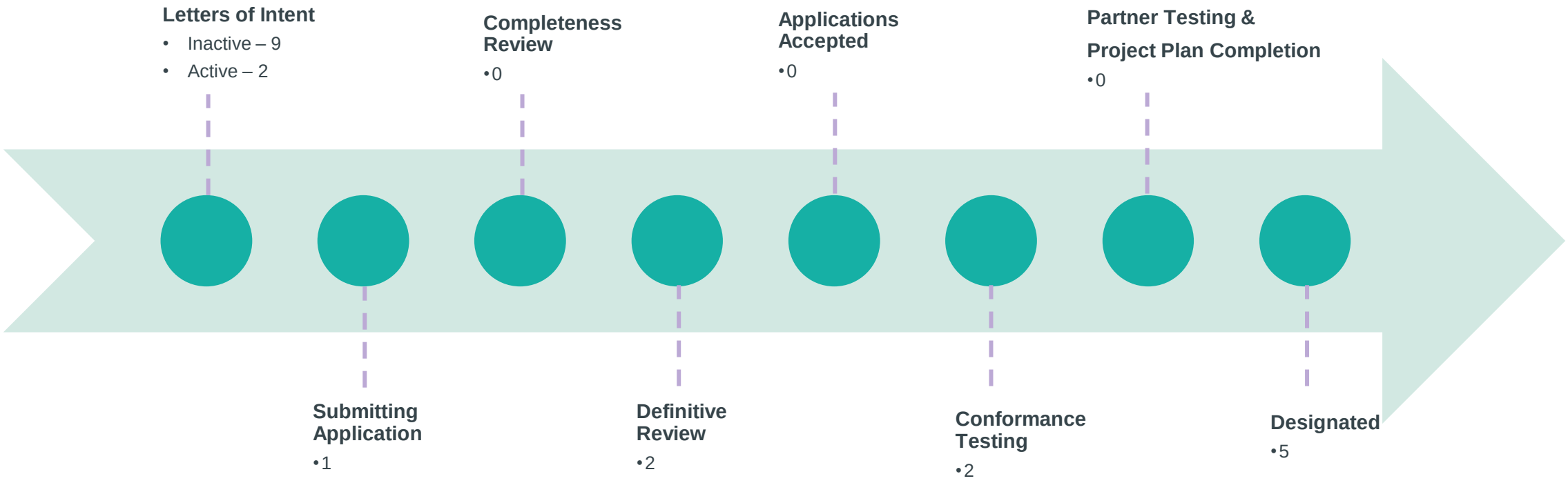
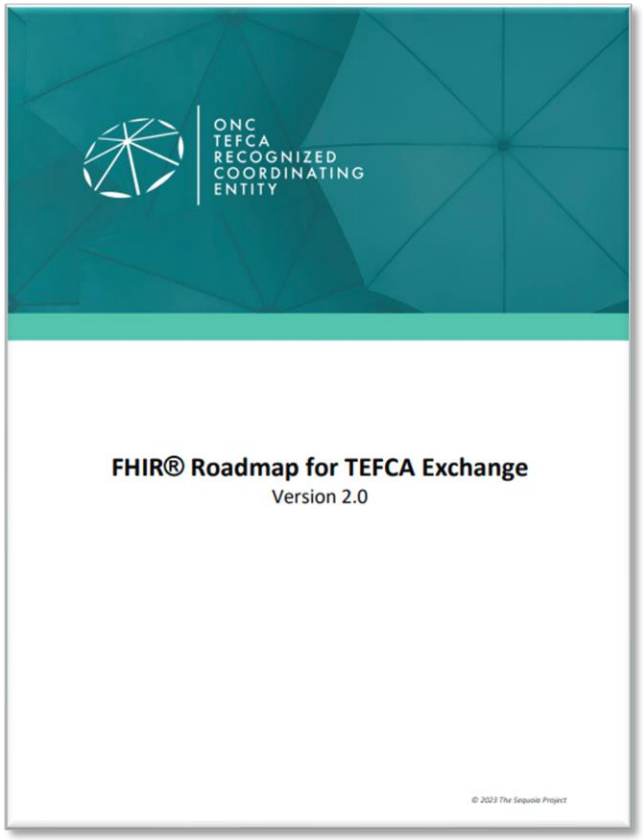


Support of FHIR and Updated Roadmap



FHIR® Roadmap for TEFCA Exchange Version 2 (sequoiaproject.org)

- **Stage 1**: FHIR Content Support − Included as part of the initial launch of TEFCA. − QHIN-brokered IHE exchange of FHIR payloads between QHINs available.

- **Stage 2**: QHIN-Facilitated FHIR Exchange − QHIN support for facilitated FHIR API exchange required. − Participant and Subparticipant exchange via FHIR APIs available.

- **Stage 3:** QHIN-to-QHIN FHIR Exchange − Support for exchange between QHINs via FHIR APIs.

- **Stage 4:** End-to-End FHIR Exchange − Support for QHIN-brokered FHIR Exchange between Participants and Subparticipants.

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ONC RCE Fact Sheets and FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

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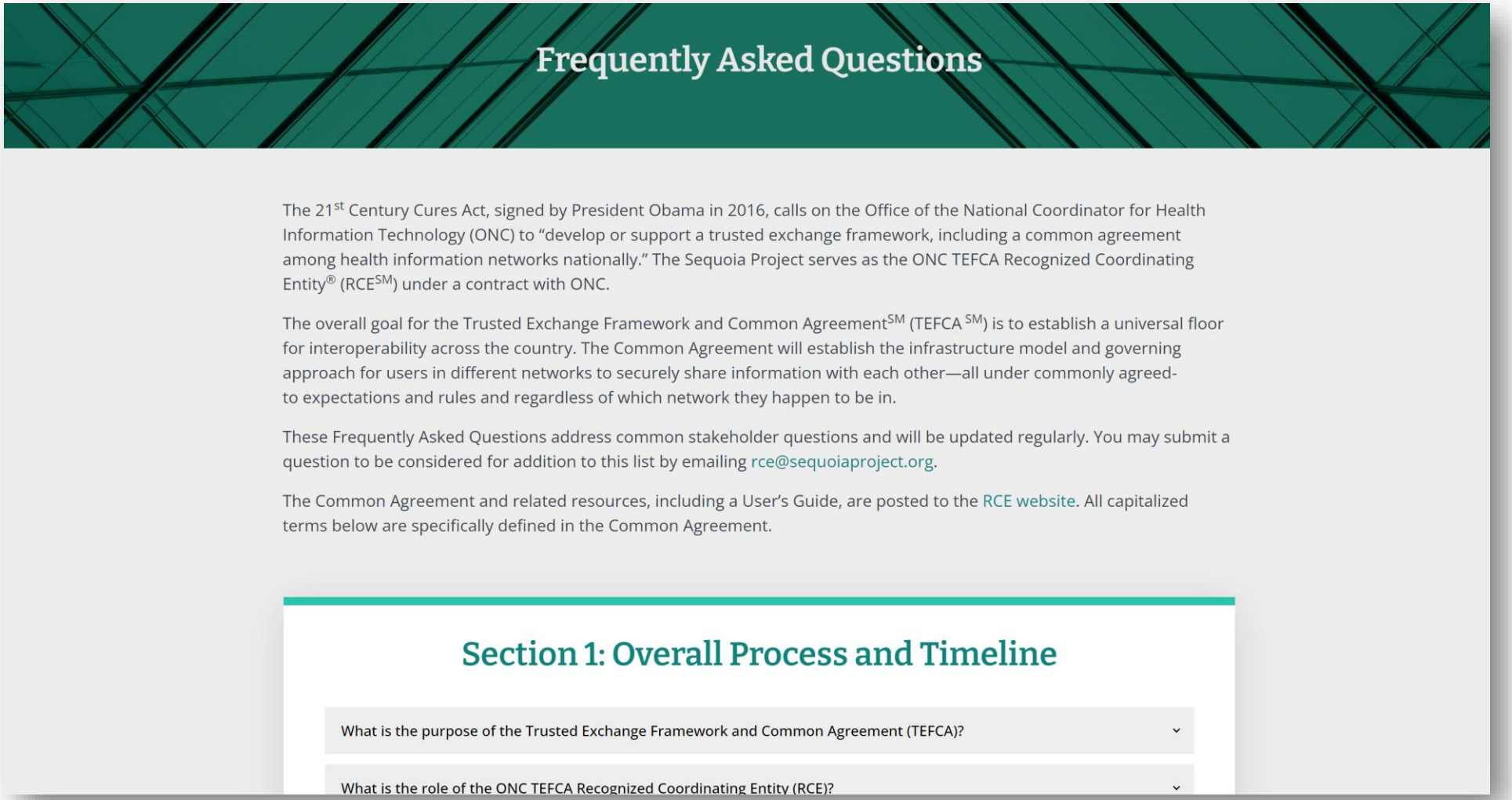

Frequently Asked Questions

The 21st Century Cures Act, signed by President Obama in 2016, calls on the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) to "develop or support a trusted exchange framework, including a common agreement among health information networks nationally." The Sequoia Project serves as the ONC TEFCA Recognized Coordinating Entity® (RCE℠) under a contract with ONC.

The overall goal for the Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement℠ (TEFCA ℠) is to establish a universal floor for interoperability across the country. The Common Agreement will establish the infrastructure model and governing approach for users in different networks to securely share information with each other—all under commonly agreed-to expectations and rules and regardless of which network they happen to be in.

These Frequently Asked Questions address common stakeholder questions and will be updated regularly. You may submit a question to be considered for addition to this list by emailing rce@sequoiaproject.org.

The Common Agreement and related resources, including a User's Guide, are posted to the RCE website. All capitalized terms below are specifically defined in the Common Agreement.

Section 1: Overall Process and Timeline

What is the purpose of the Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement (TEFCA)?

What is the role of the ONC TEFCA Recognized Coordinating Entity (RCE)?

https://rce.sequoiaproject.org/rce/faqs/

Questions to Ask: Fact Sheet

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THINKING ABOUT JOINING TEFCA?

Questions to ask your QHIN or other TEFCA connector

Nationwide sharing of health information is now possible under the Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement℠ (TEFCA℠). The federally endorsed framework provides access to clinical data when and where it is needed for informed decisions, efficient care, and better outcomes.

In order to assist providers, payers, health information networks, public health agencies, app developers, and others that want to participate in TEFCA exchange choose the best QHIN, health information network, or other technology partner for connecting, the RCE has assembled a list of important questions to ask potential QHIN vendors or intermediary connectors.

TEFCA for Individuals: Fact Sheet

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TEFCA FOR INDIVIDUALS

Individuals can access their health information via TEFCA

Almost everyone needs to access their own health information—or that of a loved one—over time. The Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement℠ (TEFCA℠) will make it easier for an individual's health information to be appropriately and securely shared online.

TEFCA will reduce the burden many patients experience as they navigate the health care system and seek to be sure that they, their doctors, and their caregivers have the right information at the right time.

What is TEFCA?

TEFCA for Executives: Fact Sheet

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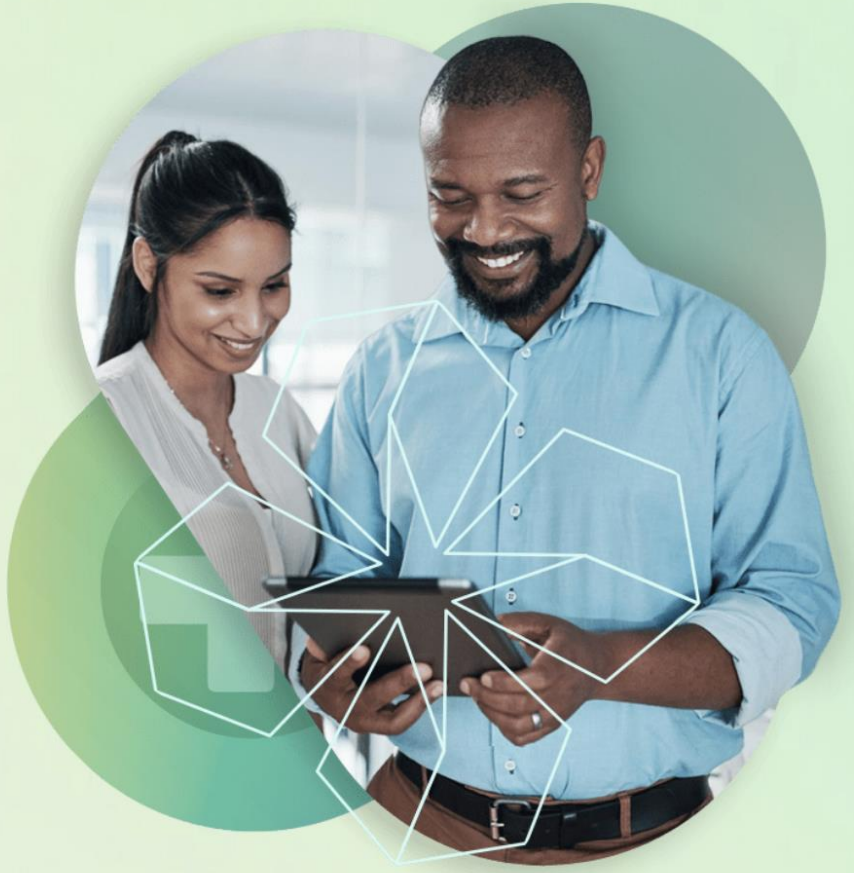
TEFCA FOR EXECUTIVES

You may have heard that TEFCA is now live

This means that the Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement[SM] for sharing health information is operational and exchange is happening every minute. TEFCA[SM] supports new and familiar exchange purposes, enabling a multitude of use cases and driving innovation.

TEFCA provides an efficient vehicle to send, receive, and query for standardized electronic health information from a broad array of participants across the nation.



TEFCA and FHIR: Fact Sheet

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TEFCA AND FHIR

HL7 FHIR is the latest addition to TEFCA Exchange

The draft Common Agreement (CA) v2.0 and draft Qualified Health Information Network™ (QHIN™) Technical Framework (QTF) V2.0 enable use of FHIR Release 4 for all use cases. Updated implementation Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) will also specify how to use FHIR for specific uses.

Once these documents are finalized, Participants and Subparticipants will be able to use Facilitated FHIR to exchange data if they want to. Facilitated FHIR is designed to allow organizations to conduct transactions directly with other participants in TEFCA exchange without having a prior connection in place. It is facilitated by usage of the RCE™ Directory Service for scalable endpoint discovery, the Common Agreement for consistent policy requirements, and the QTF and relevant SOPs for TEFCA-specific technical requirements.

While the initial discovery of where a patient's data resides will be done through a query to their QHIN, TEFCA exchange can be done directly with FHIR-enabled organizations that have listed a FHIR endpoint in the RCE Directory Service. This will allow organizations with FHIR capabilities to do specific queries targeted to the data they need in support of the TEFCA use cases defined.

Common Agreement – Detailed Comparison

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January 2022

Common Agreement v1

The Common Agreement version 1 was the initial version of the Common Agreement and reflected policies developed with extensive public input.

Addresses:

- Exchange Purposes
- Privacy and security requirements
- Expectations for cooperation and reciprocity
- Flow-down provisions

Related QTF Version: 1
Related FHIR Roadmap Version: 1

December 2023

Common Agreement v1.1

Common Agreement version 1.1 included:

- Technical and clarifying changes
- Updates to change management processes (Sections 5.2 and 5.3)
- Updates related to disclosure of confidential information (new Sections 7.2 and 7.3)
- Addition of provisions to enable QHINs to appeal RCE decisions to suspend or terminate TEFCA participation to ONC (new Section 16; updates to Section 3.1 and Section 15.6.1)
- Removal of section on federal agency forum selection (formerly Section 18.3.3) and addition of section on sovereign immunity (new Section 19.3.4)

The RCE and QHINs signed Common Agreement v1.1, enabling production exchange beginning in December 2023.

Related QTF Version: 1.1
Related FHIR Roadmap Version: 2

Common Agreement v2

The Common Agreement version 2 will include enhancements and updates to require support for HL7 FHIR® based transactions, as well as other improvements including:

- Standalone terms of participation
- Reorganization to enhance flexibility by moving certain provisions into Standard Operation Procedures

Related QTF Version: 2 – DRAFT
Related FHIR Roadmap Version: 2

Common Agreement Versions At-A-Glance

ONC TEFCA RECOGNIZED COORDINATING ENTITY

January 2022

Common Agreement v1

The Common Agreement version 1 was the initial version of the Common Agreement and reflected policies developed with extensive public input.

Related QTF Version: 1
Related FHIR Roadmap Version: 1

December 2023

Common Agreement v1.1

The Common Agreement version 1.1 included changes required by HHS prior to TEFCA exchange going live. *This is the version in operation as of the official launch of TEFCA exchange.*

Related QTF Version: 1.1
Related FHIR Roadmap Version: 2

Common Agreement v2

The Common Agreement version 2 will include enhancements and updates to require support of HL7 FHIR® based transactions.

Related QTF Version: 2 – DRAFT
Related FHIR Roadmap Version: 2

Forthcoming Opportunity for Feedback

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The RCE will release a set of draft materials in support of FHIR adoption and other advancements. These build from the existing framework and include:

Common Agreement Version 2

QHIN Technical Framework Version 2

Participant/Subparticipant Terms of Participation (ToP)

New Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

- Expectations for Cooperation
- Delegation of Authority
- Governance Approach
- XP Implementation SOP: Public Health (PH) SubXP-1
- RCE Directory Service Requirement Policy

Updated SOPs

- Exchange Purposes (XPs)
- XP Implementation SOP: Individual Access Services (IAS) Demographic Matched – *Updated from IAS Exchange Purpose Implementation*
- IAS Provider Requirements – *Updated from IAS Provider Privacy and Security Notice and Practices*
- XP Implementation SOP: Health Care Operations (HCO) SubXP-1 – *Updated from previously released draft*

New Explanatory Resources

- TEFCA Glossary
- TEFCA Cross Reference Resource

Exchange Purpose (XP) Implementation SOPs

The XP Implementation SOPs provide additional detail and define specific requirements that QHINs, Participants, and Subparticipants must follow when exchanging for a defined use case under an Exchange Purpose.

- Drafts for Public Feedback:
  - XP Implementation SOP: Health Care Operations SubXP-1
  - XP Implementation SOP: Public Health SubXP-1
  - XP Implementation SOP: Individual Access Services (IAS) Demographic Matched

- Related Resource for Public Feedback:
  - Public Health Educational Guidance

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Educational Resources and Upcoming Events

Educational Resources

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Resources

- Common Agreement v.1.1
- QHIN Technical Framework v1.1
- FHIR® Roadmap for TEFCA v.2
- Standard Operating Procedures
- QHIN Application
- Communication Protocols
- User's Guide
- Benefits of TEFCA by Stakeholder Factsheets
- FAQs

https://rce.sequoiaproject.org/tefca-and-rce-resources/

Additional Resources:
https://www.healthit.gov/tefca

All Events Registration and Recordings: https://rce.sequoiaproject.org/community-engagement/

Upcoming Events:

January 23, 2024, 12:00pm – 1:30pm ET
January 30, 2024, 12:00pm – 1:30pm ET
February 2, 2024, 1:00pm – 2:00pm ET

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Questions & Answers

For more information:
rce.sequoiaproject.org