

Challenges and Opportunities for Re-Onboarding Existing ELR Partners

Discussion Questions:

1. What experience does your jurisdiction have re-onboarding an existing ELR partner?
2. Under what circumstances do you (or would you) re-onboard a hospital or lab partner?
3. Does your jurisdiction have documentation in place for re-onboarding existing ELR partners?
4. What challenges has your jurisdiction faced when re-onboarding an existing ELR partner?
5. What are the key milestones in the re-onboarding process? How are these different than initial onboarding?
6. How does parallel validation differ between new and existing ELR partners?

Notes:

Tennessee's Experience:



Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) first begins receiving HL7 v2.3.1 ELR messages from a particular national laboratory. All culture results continue to be sent on paper.



TDH is approached by the lab regarding a pilot project for their new reporting application. TDH confirms that the Test folder is still accessible on SFTP and that the lab partner may begin sending test messages for review.



TDH reviews initial test messages from lab partner and sends feedback. Also requests an updated vocabulary worksheet.



TDH and lab partner begin having regular conference calls to review messaging and content issues.



Messaging issues resolved and parallel validation begins. Since most results are already coming through ELR in Production, TDH compares Production ELR to Test ELR. Any results coming in on paper are validated using the normal parallel validation process.



TDH begins receiving Production data from new reporting application. Data that were previously coming in Production are switched to the Test server for two weeks of post-production parallel validation and paper reporting continues for the same time period.

Challenges:

- TDH had no dedicated ELR staff between November 2015 and November 2016.
- While we have robust onboarding documentation, this was our first experience with re-onboarding so there was no documented process.
- The new reporting application that the lab partner implemented had two planned upgrades: the ability to send culture results with susceptibilities and sending multiple observations in an order. As testing occurred we discovered many additional and unexpected changes in the new application.
- This particular partner was brand new to culture reporting via HL7 messaging so they had significant issues with parent-child relationships and correctly identifying the resulted tests using standard codes.
- For parallel validation, the lab partner was unable to generate paper for those conditions already sending ELR. Production and Test ELR arrived at different days and times so comparing these required meticulous tracking of files.