Emergency Neuro Image Transfer System (ENITS)

The emergency neuro image transfer system (ENITS) allows neuro specialists such as neurosurgeons, spinal surgeons, adult and paediatric intensivist neurologists at any one of Ontario's 13 neurosurgery centres to remotely examine scans and assess whether a patient with emergency neuro trauma needs to be transferred to another facility to receive acute care or recommend immediate treatment. Prior to ENITS, all neuro trauma cases were transferred without the ability to view images and many resulted in unnecessary transfers either to the United States or to a neurosurgical centre within the province. ENITS ensures that all Ontarians, regardless of geographic location, have access to a neuro specialist surgeon 24/7.

Participating organizations (hospitals) connected to ENITS may forward patient diagnostic images (head and spine) to ENITS to facilitate consultation with a neuro specialist.

CritiCall Ontario, which already facilitates emergency neuro telephone consultations between referring physicians and neuro specialists, notifies a consulting neuro specialist when a diagnostic image has been uploaded to ENITS. The neuro specialist views the diagnostic images stored in ENITS and provides consultation.

Neither eHealth Ontario nor CritiCall Ontario have access to the diagnostic images uploaded to ENITS. Diagnostic images from the ENITS system are purged seven days after they have been uploaded to ENITS.

London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC) operates the ENITS system on behalf of eHealth Ontario, leveraging LHSC's existing diagnostic imaging systems, as well as providing hosting and support services.

Security and Privacy Safeguards

eHealth Ontario and LHSC have implemented the following safeguards to ensure protection of personal health information (PHI) stored in ENITS.

Administrative Safeguards

- Has appointed an executive point of accountability for privacy, its Chief Privacy Officer (CPO)

- Regularly reviews and enhances its privacy and security policies. Staff and contractors are required to read the relevant policies and acknowledge in writing that they have read and understood them and participate in privacy and security training including reporting of any security/privacy breaches.

- Ensures, through contracts, that any third party it retains to assist in providing services to health information custodians will comply with the restrictions and conditions necessary for eHealth Ontario to fulfill its legal responsibilities.

- Conducts privacy and security risk assessments for both product/service development and client deployments. Mitigation activities are well established and tracked as part of each assessment.

- Staff and contractors generally have no ability or permission to access personal health information. If access to personal health information is required in the course of providing eHealth Ontario services, individuals are prohibited from using or disclosing such information for other purposes.

- Staff and contractors must sign confidentiality agreements prior to joining or providing services to eHealth Ontario.

Technology Safeguards

- Authorization and authentication controls limit access to ENITS to only those individuals who require it to perform their job function.

- Records are kept whenever a person connects to ENITS and views the images. These records contain the person involved, what they did, and the date and time the activity occurred.

- Access to the information is through an encrypted web application.

- Images are not retained in ENITS, and are purged after seven days.

- Networks are protected by devices (firewalls and routers) which limit access to and from systems.

- Systems are kept up to date by installing software updates on a regular basis.

- Redundant systems are in place for all system components.

Physical Safeguards

- The system resides in specially-built facilities that are physically secured against unauthorized access.

- The facilities are staffed and monitored continuously on a 24/7 basis and are protected against environmental issues such as power outages and extreme weather conditions.