

Direct messaging — PrimeSUITE FAQs

What is Direct messaging?

Direct messaging is a technical standard for exchanging health data between healthcare entities within a trusted network. Direct messaging is similar to email with an added layer of security per the protection regulations of HIPAA. Meaningful use Stage 2 requires EHR vendors to either (a) certify their transitions of care modules or complete EHR product offerings include Direct, or (b) work with a third party to provide Direct services.

Note: To meet meaningful use Stage 2 requirements, PrimeSUITE users must add Direct messaging.

What Health Information Service Provider (HISP) does PrimeSUITE use?

The HISP for PrimeSUITE is Updox.

How are Direct messages sent from PrimeSUITE to receiving providers?

Each Direct message is sent from PrimeSUITE to the HISP partner (Updox), where the data is encrypted and the recipient is authenticated. It is then routed to the receiving provider's HISP, where the data is decrypted and the sender is authenticated.

Is Direct messaging required for Stage 2 meaningful use?

Yes, it is a Measure 15 requirement.

Is Updox DirectTrust accredited?

Yes. DirectTrust accreditation is a method of ensuring that Direct exchange members meet security, policy and business requirements. Accreditation is important because it establishes trust through the trust bundle technical exchange.

What is a Direct address?

A Direct address is needed to exchange health data using Direct messaging. It looks like a traditional email address, but is much more secure. A Direct address typically has "direct" as part of the address, such as john.doe@direct.ehrname.com. PrimeSUITE customers will have "gwaydirect" as the subdomain name; for example, john.doe@pediatricpractice.gwaydirect.com.

Note: Traditional email addresses (yahoo, gmail, etc.) are not direct addresses. A Direct message will fail if sent to a traditional email address.

Does Updox support the HPD+ (Healthcare Provider Directory Plus)?

DirectTrust is implementing a provider directory that is based on HPD. It is currently in alpha testing and is expected to be completed by the end of 2014. This feature will be built into the Updox user interface (UI) and there will be application programming interfaces (APIs) that EHR vendors can use to add the functionality into their systems.

Can a PrimeSUITE provider send a Direct message to a provider that is not in the PrimeSUITE directory?

Yes, as long as the provider has a Direct address and the provider's HISP is DirectTrust accredited.

How does the PrimeSUITE provider know if the receiving provider's HISP is DirectTrust accredited?

The receiving provider's EHR vendor should be able to supply that information. A list of DirectTrust accredited HISP's is located at directtrust.org under the Accreditation tab. Once the HPD-based provider directory is released, it will only contain the Direct addresses supported in the DirectTrust network.

If receiving providers are not in the PrimeSUITE directory, how do I send them a Direct message?

PrimeSUITE does not offer an outside provider directory. If providers are not in the PrimeSUITE directory, practices can call and ask receiving providers for their Direct address, just as you would when requesting a fax number. Once you have a provider's Direct address, add it to the Care Provider Page in PrimeSUITE.

What is the difference between an organizational and individual Direct address?

An organizational address can be shared by everyone in the practice or clinic. An individual address is for an individual provider. A provider cannot have an individual and an organizational address.

For meaningful use Stage 2 sub-part 3 of Measure 15, does the provider have to exchange a Direct message using the CMS EHR Randomizer tool?

No. According to the [CMS website](#), practices have two options to meet this measure:

- Conduct one or more successful electronic exchanges of a summary of care document, as part of which is counted in "measure 2" (for EPs the measure at §495.6(j)(14)(ii)(B)) with a recipient who has EHR technology that was developed/designed by a different EHR technology developer than the sender's EHR technology certified to 45 CFR 170.314(b)(2).
- Conduct one or more successful tests with the CMS designated test EHR during the EHR reporting period.

Why would an eligible professional need to use the CMS EHR Randomizer tool to meet sub-part 3 of Measure 15?

If there are no external providers available to exchange Direct messages, then the PrimeSUITE provider would be required to use the CMS EHR Randomizer tool to receive credit.

If using the CMS EHR Randomizer tool, do we need to exchange trust anchors with the vendor CMS matched us with?

No. It is important to note that the test vendors chosen by CMS are DirectTrust accredited. PrimeSUITE's HISP (Updox) is also DirectTrust accredited, so it is not necessary to exchange trust anchors. [This is also stated on the CMS website.](#)

Can Updox handle Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP), Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) and Cross-enterprise Document Reliable Interchange (XDR)/Cross-enterprise Document Media Interchange (XDM) file transport methods?

SMTP is the baseline requirement for meaningful use and is supported if the sending/receiving HISP is DirectTrust accredited and the sending/receiving address is a valid direct address.

SMTP+XDR/XDM is also supported where Updox delivers in the same format as it is sent (both sender and receiver EHR systems need to be able to handle the format).

SOAP+XDR/XDM requires some implementation work between Updox and the sending system.

Future plans include the ability to translate a sender's format into a format that a receiver can handle.

What is the preferred method of communication?

SMTP is the standard method of communication per meaningful use Stage 2 requirements.