

# Telehealth and Health Information Technology



**PREFER CHW  
TRAINING**

Empowering Communities through  
Genomics Education



# Learning Objectives

- Explain how CHWs can support patients in accessing telehealth and telegenetics services
- Identify common barriers to using telehealth for genetic services and develop strategies to address them.
- Describe capabilities of electronic health records and patient portals for managing genetic health information
- Assist patients in preparing for virtual genetic counseling or telehealth appointments.

# What can Health Information Technology (HIT) Systems do?

01

Facilitate access to genetic and health information

02

Explain genetic concepts in simple terms

03

Facilitate collaborative work across healthcare teams

04

Bridge gaps in access to genetic services

# HIT Terminology

Health  
Information  
Technology (HIT)

Telehealth/  
Telemedicine

Telegenetics

Electronic  
Medical/Health  
Records  
(EMR/EHR)

mHealth

Telehealth  
equity

# Health Information Technology (HIT)

Electronic systems that store, share, and analyze health information:

## Benefits:

- Faster, more accurate prescriptions
- Increased privacy and security
- More accurate records
- Quicker information sharing
- Improved transparency

# Building Rapport Using HIT

Build trust and be personable

Use eye contact/nonverbal cues

Listen with empathy

Ensure patients can access and understand information

Engage caregivers in the process

Use multiple tools like apps

Document best practices, what works and what doesn't



# What is Telegenetics?

- Using telehealth technologies for genetic counseling and consultations
- Patients can receive genetic services remotely, improving access to specialists



Expands access to genetic counselors, especially in rural areas

Reduces transportation barriers and saves time

Provides flexibility for patients and providers

Digital literacy issues

Lack of access to internet, devices, or private spaces

Body language and non-verbal cues are harder to interpret



# Telehealth Equity

“The opportunity for everyone to receive the health care they need and deserve, regardless of social or economic status.

Providing health equity in telehealth means making changes in digital literacy, technology, and analytics.

This will help telehealth providers reach the underserved communities that need it the most.”

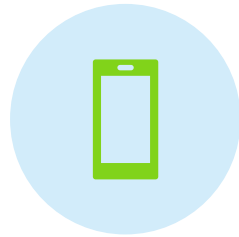
-Telehealth.hhs.gov



# Telehealth Privacy & Security Concerns



Devices and sensors may collect and transmit private information



Smartphone apps may share sensitive data



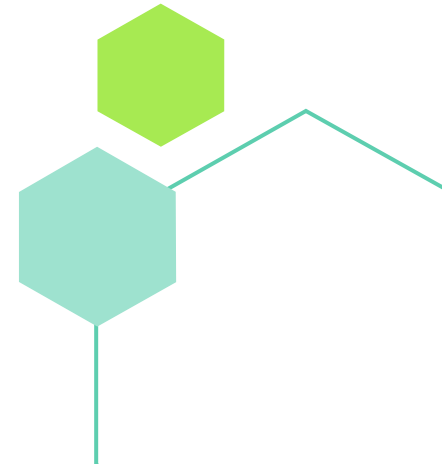
Hackers may get unauthorized access to data



Video-conferencing apps are not always HIPAA compliant



Security risks of working from home

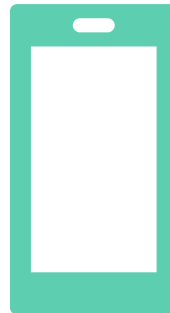


# CHWs Can Address Telehealth Concerns



Educate patients on choosing secure platforms

Advise patients to avoid public Wi-Fi when using telehealth



Encourage strong passwords and privacy settings on health apps

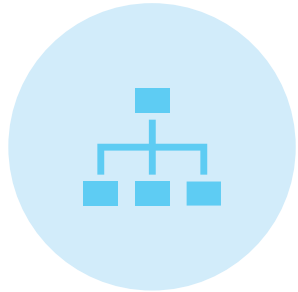
# What is an Electronic Health Record (EHR)?



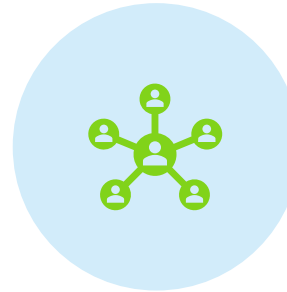
Electronic version of a patient's medical history



Includes records from visits, calls, or care provided by doctors, nurses, or other health staff.



Maintained by providers/organization over time



Helps share information between doctors, nurses, and health organizations.

# MUST-HAVE FEATURES OF AN EHR SYSTEM



PATIENT PORTAL OR  
PROFILE



COMMUNICATION  
FEATURES



E-PRESCRIPTIONS



CHARTING AND  
DOCUMENTATION  
MANAGEMENT



LAB INTEGRATION



DISTRIBUTED ACCESS  
CONTROL



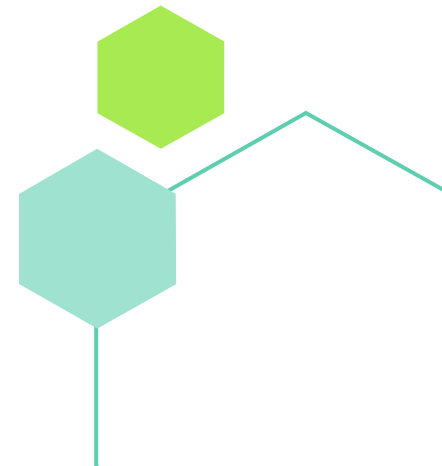
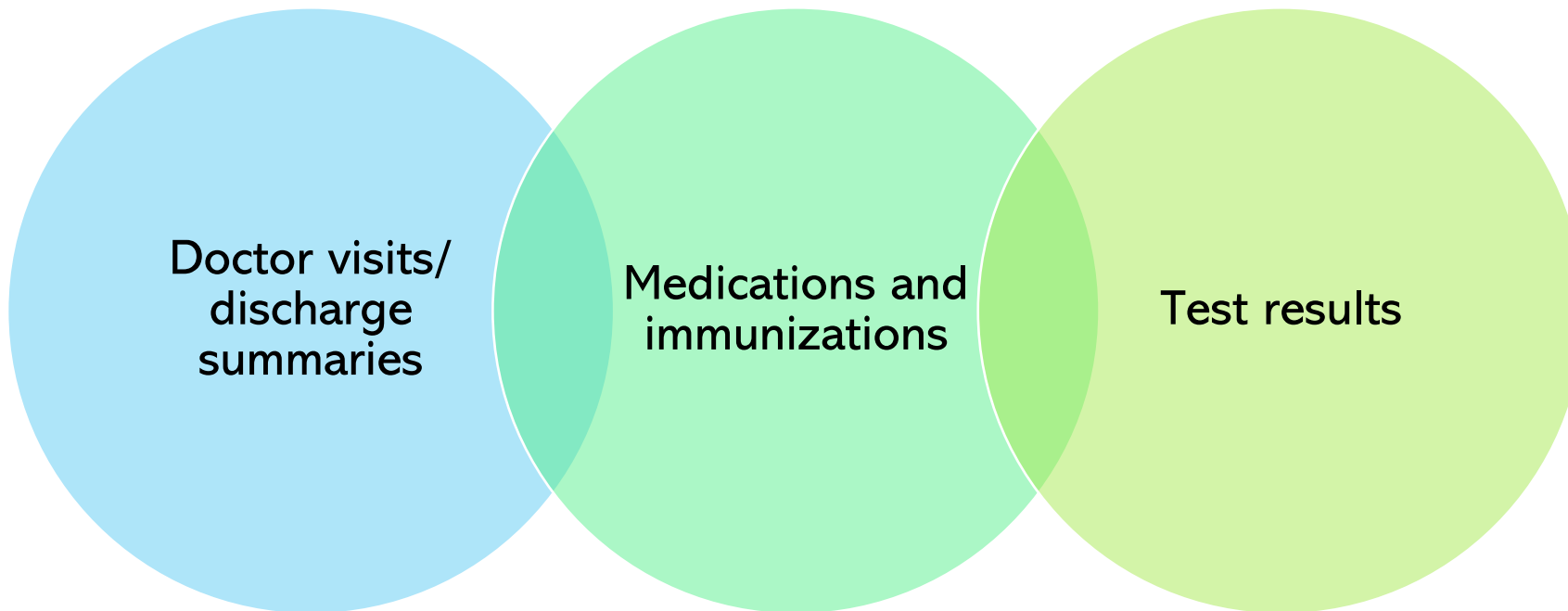
REPORTING



BILLING

# What is a Patient Portal?

*Secure online website that lets patients see their health information anytime, from anywhere they have internet access.*



# How CHWs can Help with Barriers to HIT Use

## Educate

- Provide digital literacy training to teach patients how to navigate HIT

## Teach

- Use visuals and hands-on demonstrations to reinforce learning

## Assist

- Assist with technology access to help patients locate low-cost internet services and devices

## Encourage

- Encourage practice sessions to familiarize patients with telehealth tools or portals

## Connect

- Connect patients with community technology support resources when needed

# Patient Portal Capabilities





# Patient Portals Privacy & Security Concerns

Possible security breaches resulting in HIPAA violations

Posting of critical diagnostic test results before speaking with clinician

Unauthorized access to patient data





# Workbook Activity #11

With your specific community in mind, please answer the following questions:

1. What feelings do individuals in your community have about telehealth and electronic communication?
2. What are some barriers and facilitators in utilizing telehealth for genetics in your community?
3. How may telehealth resources for genetics be best implemented in your community? What are some precautions to take to ensure telehealth equity?
4. Are there community resources in place that may allow patients to use this technology (i.e. telehealth rooms at the public library, etc.)? If so, what are they and how may they be best utilized?