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Hawaii Medical Service Association is first health plan to join Hawaii Health Information Exchange



[Matt Tuohy](#)

Reporter- Pacific Business News

[Email](#)

The **Hawaii Medical Service Association**, the state's largest health insurer, is the first health plan in the state to share patient data with the Hawaii Health Information Exchange.

The agreement between the two organizations allows HMSA to use Hawaii Health Information Exchange's network to transfer patient lab results to providers through the exchange's network.

"Our partnership with the Hawaii HIE has the potential to significantly improve the quality of care our members receive," [Hilton Raethel](#), HMSA's executive vice president and chief health officer, said in a statement. "Providers will have lab data readily available enabling them to make better diagnoses, provider better care options, and eliminate the unnecessary costs associated with redundant testing."

With the recent addition, the Hawaii Health Information Exchange is now sharing data with 13 hospitals, laboratories and HMSA. [Christine Sakuda](#), the exchange's executive director, said that other exchanges across the country are ahead of Hawaii because they have more participation from health care providers. But she said a deliberate approach is better to protect the privacy of patient data.

"We recognize that security of patient data is important for everyone," Sakuda said in a statement. "Rather than attempt rapid growth, the Hawaii Health Information Exchange makes testing and validation of the integrity of data exchange at each new phase of maturity a high priority."

Other health care organizations using the exchange include **Castle Medical Center, Hawaii Pacific Health** hospitals, The **Queen's Medical Center**, and Diagnostic Laboratories of

Hawaii.

Matt Tuohy covers health care, nonprofits and the University of Hawaii for Pacific Business News.