Sharing personal health care data – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is Interoperability in health care?

Interoperability in health care intends to create the secure online exchange of health care information/data between health care providers, members, caregivers, health plans, researchers, and anyone else involved in the health care system. A Patient Access application programming interface (Patient Access API) is the tool that works behind the scenes that allows companies to communicate with each other.

Why was this tool put in place?

To create an easy exchange of online data between patients, health plans, and others within the health care system. It allows you to securely access and share health care data when needed to make better health care decisions.

How is data shared?

Based on your permission, Independence Blue Cross (Independence) will share your or your child's personal health information electronically with a third-party app or website using an application programming interface (API). If you decide to share your or your child's data, it is your choice which third-party app or website to use. You can stop sharing your or your child's data at any time, but the third-party app or website may keep your or your child's data, which was already shared with your permission. You should review the third-party company's privacy policy before sharing your or your child's data.

Why would a member, parent, or guardian want to use a third-party app or website?

Just like learning styles, preferences for how to view information also vary. The Patient Access API allows you to shop for a third-party app or website that presents your or your child's consolidated personal health information in a way that you prefer.

Does Independence sell my or my child's health information to third-party apps or websites?

No, Independence does not sell members' personal health information to third-party apps or websites.

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How long will the third-party app or website have access to my or my child's personal health information?

Every third-party app and website is different and has their own privacy policies. Please check the privacy policy of the third-party app or website to find out how long the third-party app or website will have access to your or your child's data.

How will my or my child's personal health information remain secure?

Independence does not have oversight or control of the third-party app's or website's day-to-day practices. Independence cannot confirm if the third-party app or website is secure. Before you pick a third-party app, it is important to know what security measures the third-party app or website uses to protect your or your child's data. This information can usually be found in the app's or website's privacy policy.

If you decide to access your or your child's personal health information through a third-party app or website, you should carefully review the privacy policy. Some security questions to consider when choosing a third-party app or website:

- How will this third-party app or website *use* my or my child's data? For what purposes?
- What security measures does this third-party app or website use to protect my or my child's data?

To learn more, please read the Educational Materials – details about sharing your data located at ibx.com/chipdatasharing.

Whom should I contact with questions?

Please contact our Keystone HMO CHIP Member Help Team at the number on the back of your or your child's member ID card.

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Will children be able to limit access to personal health information?

For minors ages 14 through 17, the information shared with the third-party app or website will not include sensitive health information subject to more protective Pennsylvania state law. A current valid *Authorization to Disclose Health Information* form from the minor child is required for Independence to share any sensitive health information for minors ages 14 through 17. For more information about the *Authorization to Disclose Health Information* form, click here.

Why can I set this up for my child but not for myself?

If you are the parent or guardian of a Keystone HMO CHIP member under the age of 18, you are permitted to share your child's Independence personal health information. Under the requirements of the CMS ONC Interoperability and Patient Access API Rule, Independence is required to provide access to health care data only for current Keystone HMO CHIP and Medicare Advantage members. Currently, other Independence members do not have access to this data sharing.

Can a parent or guardian share personal health information for one or more children with a third-party app or website?

If the parent or guardian is listed as the Head of Household for the child's Keystone HMO CHIP plan, they can set up data sharing using a third-party app or website. The Head of Household of multiple children under the age of 18 can select which child's personal health information they would like to share within each third-party app or website. During the authorization process, the Head of Household will be asked to select the Keystone HMO CHIP member they would like to share with the third-party app or website.

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Sharing personal health care data – FAQs (continued)

What happens when my child turns 18?

When a Keystone HMO CHIP member turns 18, the Head of Household (parent or guardian) will no longer have access to viewing their child's health care data on the Independence member site and data sharing with a third-party app or website will stop. Children under the age of 18 listed on the Independence member site will also have their data sharing revoked/stopped. To restart data sharing for members under the age of 18, the Head of Household will need to go back to the third-party app or website to reauthorize the data sharing.

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