MedlinePlus
Trusted Health Information for You

A service of the U.S. National Library of Medicine
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MedlinePlus Connect: Linking Electronic Health Records (EHRs) to MedlinePlus Health Information

Overview

MedlinePlus Connect is a free service of the National Library of Medicine (NLM) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). This service allows any electronic health record (EHR) system to easily link users to MedlinePlus, an authoritative up-to-date health information resource for patients, families and health care providers. MedlinePlus provides information about conditions and disorders, medications, and health and wellness.

MedlinePlus has hundreds of health topic pages that bring together information from the National Institutes of Health, other U.S. government agencies and authoritative health information providers. NLM maintains these collections of information on a daily basis, adding the latest health information and removing broken links. Health topic pages include key resources to inform patients about their health: overview information labeled "Start Here", information on symptoms, treatment, recent news, clinical trials, and much more. You can browse the list of all health topics.

How it Works

MedlinePlus Connect accepts requests for information on diagnoses (problem codes) and medications. NLM has mapped MedlinePlus health topics to two standard diagnostic coding systems used in EHRs. When your EHR submits a request to MedlinePlus Connect, the service returns the closest matching health topic(s) as a response.

For problem code requests, MedlinePlus Connect supports:

- ICD-9-CM (International Classification of Diseases, 9th edition, Clinical Modification)
- SNOMED CT CORE Problem List Subset (Systematized Nomenclature of Medicine, Clinical Terms, CORE Problem List Subset)

MedlinePlus Connect can also link your EHR system to drug information written especially for patients. EHR systems can send MedlinePlus Connect a request for a medication code, and the service will return link(s) to the most appropriate drug information. MedlinePlus drug information is the *AHFS Consumer Medication Information* and is licensed for use on MedlinePlus from the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, ASHP, Inc.

For medication requests, MedlinePlus Connect supports:

- RXCUI (RxNorm Concept Unique Identifier)
- NDC (National Drug Code)

MedlinePlus Connect currently supports requests for drug information in English only. MedlinePlus Connect is intended for use within the United States health care system and cannot support coding systems not used in the United States.

Implementing MedlinePlus Connect

To use MedlinePlus Connect, you need to work with the technical representative or staff member who can add links to your EHR system as described in the technical documentation. They will use the coding information already in your system (e.g., ICD-9-CM, NDC, etc.) to automatically create links in a standard format. The links take users to a page with relevant patient information from MedlinePlus.

The level of effort varies depending on the flexibility and customizability of your system. Implementing MedlinePlus Connect is a one-time effort. Once you make this change in your system, MedlinePlus Connect will update and maintain the links between the codes and the patient information.

Future Plans

NLM is working on adding laboratory test responses to MedlinePlus Connect. We will also support an XML-based Web service at a future date. We will support ICD-10 when it becomes the U.S. standard.

MedlinePlus Connect Quick Facts

- The National Library of Medicine makes MedlinePlus Connect available to you at no cost and does not require registration or licensing.

- MedlinePlus Connect may help you achieve one of the 10 menu criteria for Meaningful Use of Health Information Technology.
- You do not have to use MedlinePlus Connect exclusively to link to patient education information. Many EHR systems can be configured to link to more than one source of patient information.
- Implementing MedlinePlus Connect will make a global change; you do not need to create individual links.
- MedlinePlus Connect is not a replacement for MedlinePlus. It is a value-added service to bring MedlinePlus content to electronic health record systems.

More Information

- See how it works on the demonstration page.
- Join the MedlinePlus Connect email list.
- Read technical information for developers.

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U.S. National Library of Medicine 8600 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20894 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services National Institutes of Health

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