



Introduction to HealthDecision EHR Integration

HealthDecision is a web-based suite of shared decision making (SDM) tools designed for use by clinicians and their patients during a clinic visit. The tools are integrated into an institution's Electronic Health Record (EHR) and thus are blended into the clinical workflow. This document provides a technical overview for the EHR integration and timeline considerations as well as the recommended personnel to help your institution plan for a successful implementation.

IMPORTANT: Because this integration will share deidentified clinical data, a parallel process of developing a Master Service Agreement (MSA) is necessary. HealthDecision can provide a draft version of this document or can work with your institution's standard MSA document. HealthDecision expects that an MSA is complete and signed prior to going live in a clinical production environment.

Technical Overview

HealthDecision is integrated into the EHR using an encrypted URL mechanism to pass clinical information from the EHR to the HealthDecision servers. Integration with HealthDecision does not require sending any Protected Health Information (PHI), as all patient, clinician, and visit identifiers are encrypted on the side of the EHR. A set of data points are sent to HealthDecision to prepopulate the tools for clinical use; depending on the HealthDecision tools chosen to be implemented at and the resources of your institution, additional EHR programming may be needed to pass the recommended parameters. Some data, like age or gender, are used by all tools, but some data are specific to a single tool. Only a few data points are necessary for minimum operation of the tools. However, the more data that can be passed to HealthDecision to prepopulate the tools, the greater efficiency clinicians will have when using them.

Patient-specific variables for a selected tool are retrieved from the EHR, appended to the URL, and then encrypted. During a patient visit, the EHR will launch HealthDecision using the resulting encrypted URL. Below is an example URL:

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https://www.healthdecision.org/orgs/[org_code]/?encrypted_data=...ENCRYPTED, BASE64 ENCODED VARIABLE STRING...
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As another option, HealthDecision has been successfully integrated using the InfoButton standard. Some vendors have rebranded InfoButton with advanced implementations; for example, Epic currently calls their implementation Active Guidelines. Please contact HealthDecision if you would like to pursue this more sophisticated integration approach.

HealthDecision is committed to making the EHR integration process as seamless as possible for your institution. As a result, the Company has worked with customers to create EHR integration guides that can assist your technical team. Please contact HealthDecision to discuss your situation and determine if one of these integration guides may apply.

Timeline and Project Plan

Our experience has shown that implementing HealthDecision tools can take from one to three months. Some of the pieces that drive this variability include EHR configuration, technical development processes, key stakeholder buy-in, and institutional readiness for change. Below is an abbreviated outline of the fundamental steps involved in the implementation of HealthDecision tools.

1. **Kick-off:** *Identify project team members, project objectives and set timeline.*
2. **Programming:** *Technical experts determine and implement project system needs.*
 - Systems engineering/programming
 - Beta testing - in a non-production EHR environment
 - Technical support
3. **Internal education and training:** *Internal project education and peer-to-peer training model.*
 - Internal champion outreach and education planning
 - Group presentations on individual tools
 - 1:1 internal champion trainings by specialty
 - Group training by specialty
4. **Go-live:** *Tool use and evaluation.*
 - Clinician use and feedback
 - Implementation process evaluation

Project Personnel

HealthDecision recognizes that the level of available project personnel will be dependent on competing institutional priorities. With this understanding, we recommend the minimum staffing model shown below. The roles and responsibilities are meant to serve as baseline estimates and descriptions. Institutional priorities and specifics may further define these roles.

Project Manager High level of involvement is required through implementation of HealthDecision into the EHR. Less involvement is required afterward through the life of the project.	
Time	Up to 5 hours/week. This estimate varies based on chosen project deliverables and depth of integration.
Responsibility	Ensure implementation is successful and progresses according to institutional objectives.
Description	This person is the primary project contact and liaison between the institution and HealthDecision implementation manager. He/she facilitates project integration, manages communication, and ensures program objectives are achieved.

Technical Developer(s)	
For Epic EHR integrations a Caché developer is required, involving a high level of technical involvement initially. This time commitment is significantly reduced as the implementation progresses. The technical developer will be required as new tools are implemented.	
Time	Baseline estimate is 50 hours for a relatively simple (few data points) implementation . A more sophisticated development will require more time.
Responsibility	Complete all requisite programming needed to implement HealthDecision tools into the EHR, including system testing and modifications as needed.
Description	This person is the primary technical contact between the institution and the HealthDecision integration team. He/she facilitates the project's technical development in tandem with the Project Manager. After implementation, the time commitment is reduced significantly and should drop to zero once testing is complete. The institution's internal technical obligations will drive the technical development timeline.
Clinician Lead(s)	
An institution typically identifies one clinical expert per tool, although a single clinical expert can cover multiple tools. A high level of involvement is required through implementation, although becomes reduced as implementation progresses. A Clinician Lead should be identified for each tool that is implemented.	
Time	Estimate 5-15 hours total. This estimate is based on time required for a simple implementation with few data points.
Responsibility	Assist in the verification of the data being selected and careful testing within the EHR to ensure fidelity of tool responses to test patients. This person may also educate colleagues about tool usage and promote acceptance.
Description	These clinicians must have EHR access (to both production and appropriate test environments) and medical expertise in the area of implementing the specific HealthDecision tool. He/she will assist testing of the tool's integration to ensure accurate data transfer and interpretation between the institution's EHR and HealthDecision. This person will also help to promote tool usage as a leader within his/her department(s).
Clinic Lead(s)	
Medium level of involvement for a longer period of time to ensure implementation is successful. He/she will be essential to the promotion of and ongoing use of the tools and will influence widespread adoption of the tool's value in patient care.	
Time	Up to 2 hours/week. This estimate varies based on current project needs as well as the Implementation Lead's project availability.
Responsibility	Promote and use the tools as well as report issues to the Project Lead for follow-up, evaluation, and process improvement opportunities. Assist with training other clinicians to use the tools.
Description	These clinicians will ensure the tools are integrated into the workflow and are widely adopted.. At a minimum there should be one Clinic Lead per tool implementation. It is helpful to the success of the implementation if he/she is viewed as a leader in the clinic.

Having worked with large, integrated health systems, HealthDecision understands that in order to be successful, an implementation initiative must align well and easily integrate into an institution's standard operating procedures. To this end, we offer personalized support to assist new institutions in facilitating HealthDecision integration and adoption.

Technical Support

We look forward to working together with your team to implement HealthDecision tools in your institution. We will be in contact soon to answer any questions you may have and to discuss the implementation specifics in greater detail.

If you have any questions, please contact us at

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