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## National Health Information Network begins test data exchange

By anne

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Last week, a handful of participants began the first practical data exchange of the national health information network (NHIN), a move that gains significance in the wake of newly-passed \$20 billion health IT stimulus plan.

The Social Security Administration began receiving medical record data from Bon Secours Richmond Health System last week, a participant in the MedVirginia regional health information organization serving central Virginia. The new exchange comes after a basic test in late 2007, when nine RHIOs first began to implement the NHIN.

The Social Security Administration is using the exchange to help it determine disability benefits eligibility more promptly. Right now, the average time it takes for the agency to process disability claims is 65 days, but with the RHIO replacing the health data, this number should be reduced by weeks. The Bon Secours Richmond systems can receive 2,500 requests for data from Social Security at one time.

The MedVirginia RHIO is the first of seven RHIOs expected to go live with a NHIN interconnection.

To learn more about the NHIN launch:  
- read this *Modern Healthcare* [piece](#) [1] (reg. req.)

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