

Wayne County Healthcare Sector

Why Is This Important?

The healthcare industry has unique challenges. It inherently generates large amounts of data that must be safe-guarded to comply with individual privacy regulations. For companies charged with managing and working with this information, high-speed Internet access and technology innovations are crucial. On a daily basis, doctors must keep up with the latest research; patient records must be easily accessible and accurate; and images, test results and prescriptions have to be delivered promptly, without errors, to practitioners, pharmacies and insurance providers. In healthcare, errors and delays are not only costly, but also dangerous.

Many providers are converting to electronic medical records which can be easily updated and shared on secure, internal networks. Network-based technologies like video-conferencing and digital stethoscopes allow specialists to consult with rural patients, reducing travel time and hazards. The ability to reach rural patients through technology has allowed many people to seek treatment that otherwise might not. Bringing the best of healthcare to every Ohio citizen is a worthy goal.

Because of the nature of its activities, the healthcare industry has found the perfect partner in high-speed Internet technology. The convenience of the Internet has simplified information transfers and improved medical equipment while maintaining confidential patient information.

Wayne County Healthcare

- Wayne Department of Health, www.wayne-health.org
- Ohio Health Care Association OHCA, www.ohca.org
- Ohio Department of Health, www.odh.ohio.gov
- Hospitals in Ohio, www.theagapecenter.com/Hospitals/Ohio.htm
- Ohio Hospital Association, www.ohanet.org
- Dunlap Memorial Hospital, www.dunlaphospital.org
- Wooster Community Hospital, www.woosterhospital.org

Where Are We Today?

Statewide, 58% of the healthcare industry utilizes Broadband. Nearly one-fourth of this figure subscribed to



Broadband in the last year. In Wayne County, residents use the Internet more than the state average within the healthcare sector. Below is a listing of the various uses of the Internet with the percentage of residents using each application:

- 71% of residents find health or medical information online (68% statewide)
- 48% of residents interact with insurance companies (36% statewide)
- 36% of residents contact healthcare professionals (28% statewide)

Wayne County has several healthcare resources. The Wayne County Health Department, www.wayne-health.org, provides a variety of health services, both to keep the community healthy and to restore the health of sick patients. The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) webpage offers applications from birth certificates to sewer permits. The services available can be viewed on the website along with health-related links such as restaurant inspection scores, community health status report and healthcare professions guide.

Wooster Community Hospital, located in Wooster, is a 150-bed full-service acute care hospital. The hospital offers a complete range of inpatient and outpatient services including, CT Scan, MRI, PET / CT Scan, Wound Healing Center, Progressive Care Unit, Home Health Care Services, Ambulatory Care Center and a Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory. Dunlap Community Hospital, located in Orrville, is a critical access facility that has serves the citizens of Orrville and eastern Wayne County. The Cleveland Clinic also operates a family health center in Wooster offering patients routine and urgent care as well as access to primary care physicians and specialists.

Wooster Community Hospital is predominately electronic and exchanges labs, radiology, etc. with physician offices. The hospital has 10MB internet connections and 30MB connections to their telemedicine provider in Cleveland through One Community. The organization also has fiber connectivity between its campus locations and many physician offices have electronic medical records or some form of electronic automation. The Wayne County Health District has T-1 connectivity, online reporting, tracking and email.

Healthcare Sector Assessment Overview			
Category	Current Assessment	Future Vision	Additional Comments
Networked Places	4	5	
Applications & Services	3	4	
Leadership	3	5	

The Wayne County eCommunity Leadership Team found that the healthcare sector is already using some technology to its advantage and identified opportunities for additional technology applications within the health community.

- **Networked Places** – In the category of networked places, Wayne County’s healthcare sector is currently at stage 4 on a 0 to 5 scale. Internet-based videoconferencing is used to consult experts and for training programs. Some patients are being monitored at home and at work via portable devices with wireless transmitters.
- **Applications & Services** – In the category of technology applications & services, the healthcare sector is currently at stage 3 on a 0 to 5 scale. Many providers have informational websites. Many providers store patient records electronically. Telemedicine is being tested. Many offices are electronically transmitting records to insurers for reimbursement.
- **Leadership** – In terms of technology leadership within the healthcare community, Wayne County is currently at stage 3 on a 0 to 5 scale. Many providers have begun the conversion to medical records. Many providers are investigating how to deploy wireless technologies for mobile workers.

Where Do We Need To Be?

The Wayne County eCommunity Leadership Team sees great potential for the use of technology in the healthcare sector. Technology advantages are already being used and additional opportunities have been identified for additional applications within the health community. The team has set goals to move networked places from stage 4 to stage 5, applications & services from stage 3 to stage 4, and leadership from stage 3 to stage 5, all on a 0 to 5 scale. The team’s vision includes:

- All healthcare proviers have access to higher broadband bandwidth to provide connectivity for a health information exchange (HIE) at the local level with eventual connections at the state and national networks.

- Greater availability and adoption of broadband by county residents in order to access provider portals, enable home monitoring and video conferencing with their healthcare provider. Having this ability will enable healthcare providers to deliver a better continuum of care.
- There is greater wireless broadband connectivity throughout the county for field worker access.
- Cloud computing is in use to enabling greater connectivity options and sharing of resources.
- Most equipment has been converted to digital. Desktop videoconferencing is routine at all hospitals and major clinics. Telephone systems have converted to VoIP to save money. Remote monitoring of patients with chronic conditions is standard procedure.
- Some providers allow patients to email doctors. Most providers store patient records electronically. Some lab results and images are received electronically.
- Healthcare leaders see themselves as a key part of the community's overall economic strategy. Leaders are visible and active in strategy development and implementation. Executives of the region's hospitals, clinics, insurers, employers and other healthcare providers are meeting regularly to find ways to collaboratively reduce the cost of healthcare without compromising quality of service.

How Do We Get There?

Project Ideas

- Work with existing and or new providers to extend broadband coverage, including wireless broadband coverage, to all areas of the county.
- Explore funding opportunities to create a community/county health information exchange.
- Work to expand the use of e-services as the availability and adoption of broadband increases in the county.

Other Potential Projects

- Increase use of video and web conferencing tools to educate healthcare professionals through distance learning and inform the public of current healthcare activities.
- Seek grants to upgrade technology and train medical staff.



The eCommunity Leaders within the Healthcare sector include:

Carla Fonte, Wooster Community Hospital

Dr. Gregory Halley, Health Commissioner, Wayne county

In working toward the implementation of the sector-specific goals, Connect Ohio will recommend specific additional participants be brought into the process, who may include technology providers, subject matter experts, other community organizations, funding sources, government agencies, and the resources of agencies and commercial providers of products and services to the healthcare sector.

Dave Davidson State Operations Manager for Connect Ohio will continue to work with the sector leaders to advance selected projects toward their completion. By leveraging Connect Ohio's project management process, its research information, and its partners, projects will be defined, developed, and reviewed to help assure that the local teams are equipped to execute them. Connect Ohio will assist in the identification of funding sources, introducing technical resources, and helping to define the measurable goals and timelines that will ensure that the projects are actionable, measurable, and valuable.