

Health Information Technology Is Leading Multisector Health System Transformation

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It has been nearly 2 years since Congress and the Obama Administration authorized as much as \$27 billion in new funding under the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to support the meaningful use of health information technology (HIT). Since that time, there has been a dramatic growth of interest in the potential for HIT to improve health and healthcare delivery.

Featuring scholarly articles and perspectives from policy-makers, payers, providers, pharmaceutical companies, health IT vendors, health services researchers, patients, and medical educators, this issue of *The American Journal of Managed Care* is a reflection of this growing interest

Perspectives from Amir Rubin and Virginia McFerran (UCLA Health System) and Cindy Bero and Thomas H. Lee (Partners HealthCare) provide insight into how HIT is shaping health system strategy at 2 major academic health systems. John Glaser (Siemens Healthcare) posits how broader health system adoption of electronic health records is enabling value-based reimbursement.

In his commentary, Congressman Pete Stark, a lead sponsor of the HITECH Act, carefully lays out the intent of the legislation. Former Speaker Newt Gingrich and colleagues offer their support for HIT and an analysis of the HITECH legislation.

Jim Ciriello (Merck & Company) and Nalin Kulatilaka (Boston University) describe how health information exchange will enable new consumer-community paradigms for healthcare delivery. Seth Cohen and colleagues from McKinsey & Company describe the growing levels of consumerism resulting from HIT.

Amol Navathe and Patrick Conway (US Department of Health and Human Services) clarify the important link between HIT and comparative effectiveness research. Reed Tuckson describes how HIT has facilitated key improvements in care for a special population of diabetic patients within UnitedHealth Group.

Writing from the perspective of patient and family, Katlyn Nemani's web exclusive article, "Finding Cancer at Home," focuses on a new medical student's search for answers about her sister's cancer diagnosis—and the poor state of health information management. She concludes that electronic health records and health information exchange can support the development of more sophisticated approaches to identifying root causes of disease.

Additional scholarly articles and reviews from the Brigham and Women's Hospital, RAND, the US Department of Health and Human Services, and the University of Utah offer specific examples of how HIT is improving medical care. Numerous perspectives describe the important reforms in medical education enabled by broad adoption of HIT.

For years, experts have speculated on the opportunities for broad adoption of HIT to improve healthcare delivery. With passage of the HITECH Act, this speculation has grown into an ongoing multisector, industry wide transformation. It is our hope that this special issue of *The American Journal of Managed Care* will shed light on this transformation and give additional direction to innovators who seek to participate in it.

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