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PHRs could save \$21 billion annually, study says

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Personal health records could save payers and providers \$21 billion annually, according to new research from the Center for Information Technology Leadership.

Interoperable PHR systems that collect and share information such as patient test results and medication lists improve efficiency in healthcare delivery by reducing waste and errors, and decreasing administrative and clinical costs, according to the center's [report](#). The center is a not-for-profit research organization housed at Partners HealthCare System, Boston. Funding for the study came from Partners as well as Google, the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society, InterComponentWare, Kaiser Permanente and Microsoft Corp. Google and Microsoft both have PHR applications that are free for users.

The study found that acquiring interoperable PHRs for 80% of Americans could cost \$3.7 billion while annual maintenance could cost \$1.9 billion. The number of users needed to make a positive return on investment for a single implementation of an interoperable PHR is 52,000 users, according to the researchers, led by Blackford Middleton, a physician who chairs the center. The study focused on four types of PHRs: provider-tethered records; payer-tethered records; third-party PHRs; and interoperable PHRs.