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Interoperable PHRs Could Save \$19B Annually, Study Finds



Widespread adoption of interoperable personal health records could save the U.S. health care system more than \$19 billion annually after expenses, according to a new study from the Center for Information Technology Leadership at Partners Healthcare System in Boston, *Health Data Management* reports.

The study found that providing interoperable PHRs to 80% of the U.S. population would cost \$3.7 billion in startup costs and \$1.9 billion in annual maintenance costs. According to the study, such widespread PHR adoption would lead to savings of more than \$21 billion annually, with most of the savings being accrued by payers.

The savings identified in the study would result from interoperable PHRs that rely on regional aggregation of patients' health care data and that are populated with information from regional data sources via standards-based automated data interchanges.

The study breaks down the savings as follows:

- Sharing of complete test results, \$7.9 billion;
- Congestive heart failure monitoring, \$6.3 billion;
- E-visits supported by PHRs, \$4.8 billion;
- Electronic medication renewals, \$1.1 billion;
- Smoking cessation management, \$1.04 billion;
- Electronic appointment scheduling, \$170 million;
- Pre-encounter questionnaires, \$72 million; and
- Sharing of complete medication lists, \$9.2 million.

Other PHR models, including those offered by providers, payers and third-party aggregators, would yield smaller savings, according to the study.

Study Funding

The study received "unrestricted research funding" from three vendors involved in PHRs:

- Google;
- InterComponentWare; and
- Microsoft.

In addition, the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society, Kaiser Permanente and Partners Healthcare System provided grants for the study (*Health Data Management*, 11/13).