



October 5, 2015

Indian Health Service Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: (301) 443-3593; newsroom@ihs.gov

IHS website: <http://www.ihs.gov>

IHS Rolls Out Improved Health Records To Benefit Patients, Providers

IHS Personal Health Record provides patients with better access to their own medical records

The Indian Health Service today deploys the IHS Personal Health Record for patients and a health information exchange for health care providers. These changes improve the existing IHS system for medical records – the Resource and Patient Management System – in use across the country in hundreds of health care facilities, both those operated by the U.S. federal government and participating facilities run by Tribal organizations and Urban Indian Health Programs.

“IHS continues to lead the way in offering advanced health information technology that enables patient access and supports high quality care,” said Robert G. McSwain, IHS Principal Deputy Director. “These latest innovations in health information technology helps to ensure coordinated care and improved health outcomes.”

The new IHS Personal Health Record provides patients with better access to their own medical records. Eligible patients who choose to sign up for an account will be able to view their own health information online, securely. This includes reviewing lab results, learning about their medications, verifying the accuracy of their medical records, and downloading a copy of their health information to keep or share with family. Patients will also be able to email their health care team through the system.

The new IHS health information exchange offers providers better access to medical records documenting the care their patients receive at other facilities. IHS and participating Tribal and Urban Indian Health Program providers will share more health information as a result of these changes. These tools make it easier for providers to work cooperatively to improve the quality of patient care. The exchange ensures that providers have access to the most accurate and most recent data about their patients.

The IHS Personal Health Record is launching as a pilot. After the pilot, access will be expanded to all patients receiving care at IHS direct service facilities operated by the U.S. federal government and participating facilities operated by Tribal organizations and Urban Indian health programs.

Tribal organizations and Urban Indian Health Programs must sign an agreement to access the enhanced features of the IHS medical records system. The agreement helps to ensure the privacy and security of the health data being exchanged. Adopting these improvements is optional, and Tribal organizations and Urban Indian Health Programs may continue to use the previous IHS medical records system if they choose.

However, signing an agreement and adopting the new system may help providers and hospitals receive Incentive Payments and avoid payment adjustments, in some cases.

IHS received \$149 million in payments for successfully participating in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Electronic Health Record Incentive program. IHS was the first part of the U.S. federal government to certify its electronic health record.

IHS, an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives.

For more information on the IHS Office of Information Technology, visit [ihs.gov/OIT](https://www.ihs.gov/OIT). For more on the Resource and Patient Management System for management of clinical and administrative information, visit [ihs.gov/RPMS](https://www.ihs.gov/RPMS).

###