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Home monitoring may prove more effective in reducing high blood pressure

Persons with high blood pressure who monitor the condition at home have more success reducing their blood pressure than those followed by a physician in a clinical setting, according to a study by Prof. Richard J. McManus from the University of Birmingham and colleagues. In the study, 527 patients age 35 to 85 were randomly assigned to one of two groups, Prof. McManus said. One group monitored blood pressure at home, the other received standard hypertension care from a physician. After six months, participants who managed their own care saw a 25 percent drop in systolic, or top, blood pressure compared to those with standard care. After a year, the systolic pressure drop in the self-managed group increased to 44 percent compared to the standard-care group. The findings "represent an important new addition to control of hypertension in primary care," McManus said. [Full Story](#)

Patients who e-mail doctors get better medical care for diseases

People who exchange e-mail with their doctors are more successful in treating diabetes, high blood pressure and retinopathy than people who don't e-mail, and they are more likely to get recommended tests, according to a study by researchers at Kaiser Permanente in Southern California. The study, one of the first to show that electronic communications have a measurable positive effect on patient outcomes, observed 35,423 patients with diabetes, hypertension, or both. The findings suggest that the improvement may be due to the fact that different types of patients chose e-mail interactions, and they could be more inclined to better manage their own health, according to Terhilda Garrido, co-author of the study and vice president of health information technology transformation and analytics at Kaiser Permanente. E-mailers also build stronger relationships with their doctors and are more likely to follow doctor's orders, Garrido said. [Full Story](#)

Federal government announces applications for mobile phones

The General Services Administration (GSA) has unveiled three new health-related applications for mobile phones as part of its redesign for USA.gov, the federal government's online home for government services. According to GSA Associate Administrator of Citizen Services and Innovative Technologies Dave McClure, the upgraded site also features now a more-sophisticated search engine and other enhanced navigation aids and "represents the direction where federal services are headed." The three applications - which allow people to check nutritional information for more than 1,000 foods through Agriculture Department data, track the UV Index and air-quality ratings with the Environmental Protection Agency, and get alerts on product and food recalls - were among 18 introduced at the site. Consumers may download the applications at no-cost from the USA.gov web site or through smartphones such

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as the iPhone, Droid or BlackBerry. [Full Story](#) [Further Information](#)

Initsys releases telecare alert-compatible Merlin 3 alarm software

Leicestershire, United Kingdom-based alarm system provider Initsys has released its Merlin 3 alarm software, which is compatible with Everon's wireless monitoring and alarm systems used in telecare applications such as nurse call, dementia care, bed alarms and fire safety, the company announced. According to Initsys Managing Director Chris Berry, Everon wireless telecare alarms use an alarm management system which directs alarms to a caregiver's mobile, along with detailed alarm information. If the caregiver does not answer the alarm call from the server, it is redirected to another caregiver or to the ARC. The upgrade will "enable a higher standard of care to be delivered in a wide range of care environments and play an important role in protecting sick and vulnerable people," Berry said. [Full Story](#)

Vicor requests permission to market cardiac failure prevention software in U.S.

Boca Raton, FL-based biotechnology company Vicor Technologies Inc. has applied to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for approval to market its PD2i heart attack detection software in the United States. According to Vicor Chief Executive Officer David H. Fater, PD2i's nonlinear algorithm program successfully predicted congestive heart failure in more than one-third of participants in a 44-month study conducted by the University of Rochester and the Catalan Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences in Barcelona. The filing with the FDA "brings us one step closer to being able to market our PD2i algorithm and software to cardiologists, thus enabling them to more effectively identify their congestive heart failure patients at elevated risk of cardiac mortality," Fater said. [Full Story](#)

New cost-cutting EHR system would target medical record keeping for seniors

Researchers at the University of Missouri in Columbia are developing an electronic health record (EHR) system designed to improve medical record keeping among seniors and also help hospitals and other healthcare facilities cut costs. The U.S. Administration on Aging expects the number of elderly Americans to double to 72 million by 2030, which is also expected to cause healthcare expenses to rise dramatically, according to Marilyn Rantz, professor in the MU Sinclair School of Nursing. Maintaining accurate records for this population will be overwhelming, she said. Initial findings indicate that use of the EHR system can enhance nursing care coordination, and advance technology use and clinical research. A study on the research team's efforts appears in the *Journal of Gerontological Nursing*. [Full Story](#)

Fast-rising BRIC telemedicine market to reach \$418 million by 2014

The telemedicine market in Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) is expected to top \$418 million by 2014, for a five-year growth rate of almost 16 percent, according to a report by research and consulting firm MarketsandMarkets. The Dallas-based company's report said the market growth will come from an increase in the number of patients suffering from chronic diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), chronic heart failure (CHF), asthma, hypertension, and diabetes, and increased spending on information technology over the next few years. In addition, increasing demand for better healthcare services and growth in telecommunication networks are impacting the BRIC telemedicine market, the report adds. BRIC countries, which account for more than a quarter of the world's land area and more than 40 percent of the world's population, are considered the four most rapidly developing nations in terms of technology, experts note. [Full Story](#)

Australian general practitioners, Telstra to design e-health service program

In what is viewed as a major first step in Australia's e-health reforms and electronic record storage efforts, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and Melbourne-based telecommunications company Telstra Corp. plan to create a suite of national e-health solutions and services. According to RACGP President Dr. Chris Mitchell, the Web-hosted service will have the capacity to host multiple healthcare applications including clinical software programs, decision support tools for diagnosis and management, care plans, referral tools, e-prescribing tools, and a

range of online training and other administrative and clinical services. The program will enable general practitioners to offer increased efficiencies for their practice and "provide real opportunities to significantly improve the quality of care GPs can deliver to their communities," Mitchell said. [Full Story](#)

France to launch national EHR service by end of year; EPR service planned

In December residents of France will be able to begin creating their own electronic health records (EHRs). That's when the French ASIP Santé (Agence des Systèmes d'Information Partagés de Santé) plans to launch its dossier médical personnel (DM-Personnel), an EHR aimed at helping citizens organize health records for consultation with their general practitioner (GP) and other healthcare providers seeking medication histories and a summary of recent surgeries, according to ASIP Santé Director Jean Yves-Robin. And over the next few years, the agency will develop the dossier médical patient (DM-Patient), an electronic patient's record (EPR) that will be shared among healthcare professionals, specialists and clinicians with detailed reports of a patient's care, including lab reports and medical images. The switch will save the country's health system more than \$4.4 billion [USD] annually, and will clearly make France into the EHR leader in Europe, Yves-Robin said. [Full Story](#)

Doctors still reluctant to join Twitter and Facebook masses

Twitter and Facebook may be the fastest-growing social media sites on the Web, but they're not making a lot of headway among doctors, according to a report in *USA Today*. Concerns about time and patient privacy have kept many physicians from linking their practices to social media sites, a move that many consider patient-friendly and communication-inspiring. Others prefer the anonymity and safety from litigation that comes from staying off the grid, according to Evanston, IL cardiac electrophysiologist Westby Fisher. There's also a lack of financial incentive, as doctors typically get paid only for talking to patients in the examining room. The American Medical Association is examining use of social media sites by doctors and plans to report its findings during an annual meeting in November, *USA Today* reports. [Full Story](#)

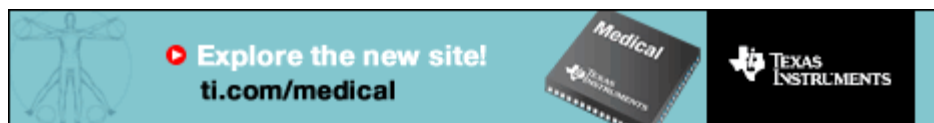
Most CIOs worried they won't meet deadline for 'meaningful use' incentives

Eight in 10 hospital chief information officers (CIOs) are concerned or very concerned they will not be able to demonstrate "meaningful use" of electronic health records (EHR) within the federally established deadline of 2015, according to a report by PricewaterhouseCooper's Health Research Institute. The report, "*Ready or not: On the road to the meaningful use of EHRs and health IT*," also found that only half of the 120 CIOs surveyed say they will be prepared to meet the first set of meaningful use requirements and apply for incentive bonuses in 2011, the first year they are available. According to Daniel Garrett, leader of the health information technology practice at PricewaterhouseCoopers, many healthcare providers "are mired in the complexity of incentive-rule criteria and may not be working toward longer-term goals for meaningful EHR usage." [Full Story](#)

Internet not a good data source for self-treatment of sports health problems

Much of the information that appears on the Internet about sports-related injuries is incomplete or inaccurate, potentially making the Web a hazardous way for patients to perform self-treatment, according to a report by researchers at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte, N.C. According to study senior author Madhav A. Karunakar, MD, at CMC Charlotte, nearly three-quarters of Americans can access the Internet, and more than half go online for health-related information at least once a month. In the study, nonprofit sites, including those for medical journals, scored the highest, followed by academic sites, and then certain non-sales-oriented commercial sites such as WebMD and eMedicine. The least accurate information sources were newspaper articles and personal web sites. Commercial sites with a financial interest in the diagnosis, such as those sponsored by companies selling a drug or treatment device, were very common but frequently incomplete. The study appears in the July issue of *The Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery*. [Full Story](#) [Further Information](#)

Movers & SHAKERS



Debbie Lance, director of the Solutions to Obstetrics in Rural Counties (STORC) project, discusses the perinatal telemedicine consultation service with HealthLeaders media... **Richard Blumenthal**,

Connecticut Attorney General, reached a \$250,000 settlement with insurer Health Net over loss of a 2009 computer hard drive containing 500,000 members' private health information...**Maurizio Vecchione**, CEO of CompuMed, announced the company has secured extended contracts with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections and the Arizona Department of Corrections to provide medical services via its CardioGram electrocardiogram remote interpretation systems and over-read services...**Lee Meyers**, president and CEO of Central Penn Management Group (CPMG), announced they had selected the Allscripts Electronic Health Record for Physicians Alliance, a 120-provider, multispecialty group that CPMG manages...**Brant Russell, RN, MSN, MBA**, system director of emergency and trauma services for Summa Health System, announced a collaboration with Healthagen to provide health information with the iTriage smartphone application, including providing mobile users with access to Summa's ER wait times...**Daniel Hilferty**, president of health markets for Philadelphia-based Independence Blue Cross, announced that its members now have access to a personalized health record (PHR) through ibxpress.com...**Dr. Kenneth R. Carter**, a family medicine practitioner and developer of the Granite Falls Municipal Hospital and Manor's tele-stroke protocol, was honored for his 40 years of service to the institution...[Please send us](#) your news on Movers and Shakers in the field.

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