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Healthcare Groups Issue New Guides To Using Personal Health Records
Brochures will help consumers and clinicians better utilize PHRs to manage their healthcare

WASHINGTON – Key healthcare organizations are teaming up to help take the mystery out of using personal health records (PHR) by rolling out two new informational brochures to help promote the understanding and use of PHRs among consumers and clinicians. The new brochures: “Your Personal Health Record,” and “A Clinician Guide to a Personal Health Record,” will be available [online \(http://bcbs.com/healthcare-partners/personal-health-records/\)](http://bcbs.com/healthcare-partners/personal-health-records/) at BCBS.com.

PHRs are valuable online tools for making better informed healthcare decisions and enhancing care coordination. The brochures, which include screenshots of PHRs, user testimonials, and an informative Q&A, were created through a collaboration of healthcare groups including the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association (BCBSA), the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), the American Cancer Society (ACS), the American College of Physicians (ACP), the American Diabetes Association (ADA), the American Heart Association (AHA), the American Osteopathic Association of Medical Informatics (AOAMI), and MGMA-ACMPE.

As recent reports show, when more healthcare data is available to consumers, their caregivers and doctors, it can help improve the coordination of care.¹ By making these brochures available, key healthcare stakeholders hope to increase the adoption and use of PHRs by showing consumers how they can use PHRs to store vital health information such as medical conditions, allergies, medications, and doctor or hospital visits in one convenient and secure place. For clinicians, the brochures describe the benefits of using PHRs to help them deliver quality care to their patients and make their practices run more efficiently.

With PHRs, individual patients and their designated caregivers can take charge of their healthcare choices by viewing and managing their own health information. PHRs also enable patients to quickly and readily share healthcare information with their providers, which allows for better tracking of chronic diseases and helps their provider determine the most appropriate treatment plan.

To encourage the continued growth of PHR usage, these brochures were designed to help improve consumers' familiarity and comfort level with PHR tools and encourage more participation and adoption.

For more information about PHRs or to download copies of the PHR Quick Reference Guides for consumers or providers, please visit www.bcbs.com/phr_brochure, http://www.aoami.org/phr_brochure.cfm or <http://www.mgma.com/phrguide/>.

¹ Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, “Personal Health Records: What Health Care Providers Need to Know”, <http://healthit.hhs.gov/media/about-phrs-for-providers-011311.pdf>.

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About Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association is a national federation of 38 independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that collectively provide healthcare coverage for nearly 99 million members – one-in-three Americans. For more information on the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association and its member companies, please visit www.BCBS.com.

About American Health Information Management Association

Representing more than 64,000 specially educated Health Information Management professionals in the United States and around the world, the American Health Information Management Association is committed to promoting and advocating for high quality research, best practices and effective standards in health information and to actively contributing to the development and advancement of health information professionals worldwide. AHIMA's enduring goal is quality healthcare through quality information. www.ahima.org.

About American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end suffering from cancer. As a global grassroots force of more than three million volunteers, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. We save lives by helping people stay well by preventing cancer or detecting it early; helping people get well by being there for them during and after a cancer diagnosis; by finding cures through investment in groundbreaking discovery; and by fighting back by rallying lawmakers to pass laws to defeat cancer and by rallying communities worldwide to join the fight. As the nation's largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, contributing more than \$3.5 billion, we turn what we know about cancer into what we do. As a result, about 11 million people in America who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more about us or to get help, call us any time, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit www.cancer.org.

American Diabetes Association

The American Diabetes Association is leading the fight to Stop Diabetes and its deadly consequences and fighting for those affected by diabetes. The Association funds research to prevent, cure and manage diabetes; delivers services to hundreds of communities; provides objective and credible information; and gives voice to those denied their rights because of diabetes. Founded in 1940, our mission is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. For more information please call the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or visit www.diabetes.org. Information from both these sources is available in English and Spanish.

American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – America's No. 1 and No. 3 killers. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based association is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. To learn more or join us, call 1-800-AHA-USA1 or any of our offices around the country, or visit www.heart.org.

About American Osteopathic Association of Medical Informatics

The American Osteopathic Association of Medical Informatics (AOAMI) is a 501(c) not-for-profit member association. It is the only medical informatics specialty association that serves the needs of osteopathic physicians as well as corporate members. Its primary purpose is to promote expertise in the use of technology in support of patient care. To learn more about the AOAMI, visit our Web site at www.aoami.org.

About American College of Physicians

The American College of Physicians is the largest medical specialty organization and the second-largest physician group in the United States. ACP members include 132,000 internal medicine physicians (internists), related subspecialists, and medical students. Internists specialize in the prevention, detection, and treatment of illness in adults. Follow ACP on Twitter and Facebook.

About MGMA-ACMPE

MGMA-ACMPE is the premier association for professional administrators and leaders of medical group practices. In 2011, members of the Medical Group Management Association (MGMA), and its standard-setting body, the American College of Medical Practice Executives (ACMPE) voted to merge to form a new association. Since 1926, the association has delivered networking, professional education and resources, political advocacy and certification for medical practice professionals. The association represents 22,500 members who lead 13,600 organizations nationwide in which some 280,000 physicians provide more than 40 percent of the healthcare services delivered in the United States.

MGMA-ACMPE's mission is to continually improve the performance of medical group practice professionals and the organizations they represent, helping medical practices provide efficient, safe, patient-focused and affordable care. MGMA-ACMPE is headquartered in Englewood, Colo., and maintains a government affairs office in Washington, D.C. Please visit www.mgma.com.

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Quotes from Partner Organizations In Support of New Personal Health Record (PHR) Brochures

Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association (BCBSA)

Dr. Allan Korn, Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer

"Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies are committed to providing consumers with tools and information to help them make well-informed healthcare decisions. PHRs can empower consumers and clinicians by getting readily available health information into the right hands at the right time. Simultaneous access to important and personal information will help to enhance and bond the doctor-patient relationship adding yet another dimension of value to our many Blue Cross Blue Shield supported medical homes."

American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)

Lynne Thomas Gordon, Chief Executive Officer

"If you or a loved one have ever gone to the emergency room or sought treatment at an urgent care center, you know how important it is to have an easily accessible and accurate list of current medications, past procedures and medical history. When you are nervous, frightened or not feeling well, it is hard to remember all the details of your past treatments and the dosages of the medications you are taking. All of this information can be kept and updated in your personal health record. Once that information has been collected, it is then safely stored, maintained and managed by a professional health information manager so that it is available for any future visits. Providing as much information as you can about your health history is essential to getting the best care."

MGMA-ACMPE

Susan, L. Turney, MD, MS, FACP, FACMPE, President and CEO

"We encourage medical practices to promote patients' use of personal health records as a means for them to engage more fully in their care. This results in more collaboration with those who manage their care. It also encourages improved patient-provider communication and facilitates the ability of practices to deliver the best outcome."

American Diabetes Association (ADA)

Sue Kirkman, MD, Senior Vice President, Medical Affairs and Community Information

"Millions of Americans are living with diabetes, a disease that requires people to track an enormous amount of data and numbers to effectively manage their health. Having a Personal Health Record is an important step in allowing people with diabetes to manage and share valuable health information, and focus on making better healthcare decisions."

American College of Physicians (ACP)

Michael S. Barr, MD, MPH, FACP, Senior Vice President, Medical Practice, Professionalism and Quality Improvement

"ACP is eagerly involved in this collaboration that enables individuals to control their own medical data from multiple sources and to create and utilize their personal, private and portable electronic health records as a component of redesigning the health care system. PHRs enable individual patients and their designated caregivers to view and manage health information and play a greater role in their own healthcare choices. Patients have the ability to quickly and readily share healthcare information via a PHR, allowing providers to help determine a treatment plan and keep track of chronic diseases."

American Osteopathic Association of Medical Informatics (AOAMI)

Carl G. Bynum, D.O., MPH, President

"Osteopathic physicians believe that an individualized approach to treatment is crucial to providing the highest-quality patient care. Having a PHR puts health data that is critical to making the best decisions literally at the fingertips of both the patient and the physician during each and every visit."

American Cancer Society (ACS)

J. Leonard Lichtenfeld, MD, Deputy Chief Medical Officer

"A personal health record can provide a medical professional with a valuable foundation for understanding how to take care of a patient. For a patient, having accurate, up-to-date medical information can be vital when navigating the healthcare system, especially in an emergency."

American Heart Association (AHA)

Nancy Brown, Chief Executive Officer

"Reliable, up-to-date patient data is vitally important for effective medical treatment. That's why personal health records should be viewed as an indispensable patient resource. PHRs enable caregivers to make informed, timely decisions on behalf of their patients. PHRs also encourage patients to become more engaged in their own care by tracking their own risk factor readings and other personal health metrics."

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