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## Study to examine electronic health records safety

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) will conduct a year-long study to identify best policies and practices for improving healthcare safety and reducing malpractice when using electronic health records. The study will focus on prevention of health IT-related errors, rapid reporting of patient safety concerns and methods to promote safety-enhancing features of electronic health records.

After reviewing the available evidence about how health information technology (HIT) affects patient safety and care, the study will issue recommendations to maximize the safety of HIT-assisted health care services. In addition, the study will discuss the potential effects of government and private sector HIT efforts.

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Highlights of the study are expected to include:

- Summary of existing knowledge of the effects of HIT on patient safety;
- Identifying approaches to promote the safety-enhancing features of HIT while protecting patients from any safety problems associated with HIT;
- Identifying approaches for preventing HIT-related patient safety problems before they occur;
- Identifying approaches for surveillance and reporting activities to bring about rapid detection and correction of patient safety problems;
- Addressing the potential roles of private sector entities such as accrediting and certification bodies as well as patient safety organizations and professional and trade associations; and
- Discussion of existing authorities and potential roles for key federal agencies, including the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

The study will be carried out under a \$989,000 contract announced today by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, the agency charged with coordinating U.S. government HIT efforts.

Source: [Earth Times](#)

You'll find more information about the Institute of Medicine's activities and projects [here](#).

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