

# MARKLE FOUNDATION

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## **Meaningful Investment of \$19 Billion on Health Information Technology**

*Markle Connecting for Health announces broad agreement on principles for Getting Health IT Right under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*

WASHINGTON, DC – Today the Markle Foundation hosts a forum to discuss the \$19 billion allocated to investments in health information technology (IT) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Leaders in health care and information technology will meet with government and policy experts to talk about how these health IT investments can be directed toward improving health care outcomes, protecting patient privacy, and reducing growth in health care costs, laying the groundwork for health reform.

Markle Connecting for Health released key principles, supported by a diverse group of health and technology leaders, outlining an initial approach to getting health IT right under ARRA.

“The leaders present here will be instrumental in achieving the goals of ARRA and in making sure that these investments support broader health reform efforts,” said Zoë Baird, President of the Markle Foundation.

The event announces the release by Markle Connecting for Health of a new document entitled *Achieving the Health Objectives Under ARRA: A Framework for "Meaningful Use" and "Certified or Qualified" EHR*. The definition of meaningful use will determine how clinicians and hospitals qualify for the health IT incentives included in the economic stimulus law. The document is available for download at [www.connectingforhealth.org](http://www.connectingforhealth.org).

The document was developed with the collaboration of a diverse group of consumer, business, and health organizations. Individuals supporting the document come from a wide array of organizations, including:

AARP • Allscripts • America's Health Insurance Plans • American Academy of Family Physicians • American College of Cardiology • American College of Emergency Physicians • American Medical Association • Association of Online Cancer Resources (ACOR) • Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association • Center for Democracy and Technology • Center for Information Therapy • Childbirth Connection • Children's Health Fund • Chilmark Research • Consumers Union • DocSite, LLC • Dossia • DrFirst • GenesysMD • Google • Health Care For All • Health Level Seven, Inc. • IBM • Intel Corporation • The Joint Commission • Keas, Inc. • McKesson Provider Technologies • Medical Group Management Association • Mental Health America • Microsoft Corporation • National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship • National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) • National Consumers League • National Partnership for Women & Families • National Patient Advocate Foundation • NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital and NewYork-Presbyterian Healthcare System • Northwest Health Foundation • Pacific Business Group on Health • Prematics, Inc. • ReachMyDoctor • Surescripts • WebMD Health • Vanderbilt Center for Better Health • Zix Corporation

“The consensus that we’ve been able to build—and continue to build—around the principles in this paper is truly remarkable,” said Baird. “There is enormous potential to improve our health care system through modern information tools. To do that, we need to set clear goals, define meaningful use as the use of information to improve health, and adopt an approach to technology and standards that fosters market innovation.”

The group advises practical starting points for using information to achieve the goals of ARRA. It says a basic set of open standards are necessary, along with assurances that systems bought with federal support are being used to achieve health improvement goals. The group recommends an approach to technology that encourages innovation of tools and services particularly for clinicians in small office practices.

“Meaningful use is not about technology for the sake of technology,” said Carol Diamond, MD, MPH, Managing Director at the Markle Foundation and Chair of the Markle Connecting for Health Initiative. “It’s about using that technology to improve health. We must invest this money in ways that support information use to improve quality, slow growth in costs and protect privacy, without creating undue burden on clinicians and practices.”

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The Markle Foundation works to realize the full potential of information and information technology to address critical public needs, particularly in the areas of health and national security. Markle collaborates with innovators and thought leaders from the public and private sectors whose expertise lies in the areas of information technology, privacy, civil liberties, health, and national security. Learn more about Markle at [www.markle.org](http://www.markle.org).

Markle’s Connecting for Health initiative is a public-private collaborative with representatives from more than one hundred organizations across the spectrum of health care and information technology specialists. Its purpose is to catalyze the widespread changes necessary to realize the full benefits of health information technology while protecting patient privacy and the security of personal health information. Markle Connecting for Health tackles the key challenges to creating a networked health information environment that enables secure and private information sharing when and where it’s needed to improve health and health care. Learn more about Markle Connecting for Health at [www.connectingforhealth.org](http://www.connectingforhealth.org).

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