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## Microsoft, Google And Others Agree To Electronic Health Records Standard

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In a move designed to prompt more people to store their medical records online, [Microsoft](#) ( [NSDQ: MSFT](#)), [Google](#) ( [NSDQ: GOOG](#)) and several others have agreed on privacy standards to protect patients' information. The list includes [WebMD](#) ( [NSDQ: WBMD](#)), [MedicAlert](#), [AARP](#), [Consumer Reports](#) publisher [Consumers Union](#), [BlueCross BlueShield](#), and other insurers.

Drafted by the Markle Foundation's [Connecting For Health](#), the new principles include:

- an audit trail to track data usage
- safeguards protecting unauthorized access, use and destruction
- a ban on using the information to discriminate at the workplace
- a guarantee that entities in control of the records be held responsible for implementing these principles

So far, consumers have been slow to adopt electronic personal health records (PHRs); Markle reports only 6.1 million adults maintain their records this way. But theoretically, PHRs give patients greater control of their information and enable them to share their histories with new doctors and specialists more easily.

[Framework](#) (via PDF) | [Release](#)

**AP:** Meanwhile, the House of Representatives today debated a bill to set up a national coordinator for health information and encourage adoption of electronic PHRs, and a companion bill, though its details are unclear, is being reviewed by the Senate. Privacy concerns for consumers have stalled the progress on this.

**Staci adds:** Cluetrain Manifesto co-author Doc Searls writes about health care from the perspective of a patient (who has been through way too much lately? glad you're out, Doc), a journalist and a participant in [ProjectVRM](#), an effort to give individuals ways to deal with vendors and providers. In the just-published piece [The Patient as the Platform](#), Searls writes "I think systems like [Google Health](#) and [HealthVault](#) ? at least in concept ? are steps in the right direction. But we won't have true independence, we won't have control of our own health care, if we still remain dependents of one large company or another."

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