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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](#) 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.<sup>1</sup> 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

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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.bcbs.com/phr_brochure), [http://www.aoami.org/phr\\_brochure.cfm](http://www.aoami.org/phr_brochure.cfm) or <http://www.mgma.com/phrguide/>.

<sup>1</sup> 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>.

#### Contacts:

Kelly Miller, BCBSA  
202.626.4825  
[kelly.miller@bcbsa.com](mailto:kelly.miller@bcbsa.com)

Judy Fortin, ACS  
404.417.5860  
[judy.fortin@cancer.org](mailto:judy.fortin@cancer.org)

Lauren Gleason, ADA  
703.549.1500 ext. 2622  
[lgleason@diabetes.org](mailto:lgleason@diabetes.org)

Cathy Lewis, AHA  
214.706.1324  
[cathy.lewis@heart.org](mailto:cathy.lewis@heart.org)

Shauna Schuda, AHIMA  
312.233.1097  
[shauna.schuda@ahima.org](mailto:shauna.schuda@ahima.org)

David B. Kinsman, APR, ACP  
202.261.261.4554  
[dkinsman@ACPOonline.org](mailto:dkinsman@ACPOonline.org)

Annette Van Veen Gippe, AOAMI  
312.202.8142  
[agippe@osteotech.org](mailto:agippe@osteotech.org)

Liz Johnson, MGMA-ACMPE  
303.799.1111 ext. 1347  
[ljohnson@mgma.com](mailto:ljohnson@mgma.com)

#### **About the 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](http://www.BCBS.com).

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**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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.mgma.com).

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