

# The Secret to Health IT's Success for Diabetes Patients

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Health information technology (IT) has enormous potential to improve health care quality, reduce costs and engage patients in their own care. But the potential payoff for use of health IT among diabetes patients is magnified due to the prevalence, cost and complexity of the disease. Various health IT applications are already available to diabetes patients that allow them to upload their blood glucose level data from glucose meters to computer-based management programs, where the data can be stored or shared with their providers, or lets them manually enter data related to diet and exercise into an online Personal Health Record or a smart phone.

But without a comprehensive privacy and security framework in place that sets up clear parameters for data access, use, and disclosure, the risk of the data falling into the wrong hands and being used for inappropriate purposes is heightened. For example, data related to diet and exercise is sensitive information that many would not want exposed. CDT Policy Counsel Sheel Pandya addresses these concerns in-depth in her recent [article](#) [1] for the [Journal of Diabetes Science and Technology](#) [1].

Luckily, the timing for putting such a comprehensive framework in place could not be more favorable given the confluence of developments in both health care reform and health IT. Moving forward, policymakers will need to continue to pay attention to privacy and security issues in order to build a strong foundation of trust in health IT. The time is now to develop effective, comprehensive privacy and security protections for personal health data online.

- [PHRs](#)
- [health IT](#)
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[1] <http://www.journalofdst.org/index.html>