



News Release

SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security and Kaiser Permanente Begin Partnership to Speed Up Disability Decisions

Unprecedented Agreement Will Cut Cost, Save Time and Improve Service

The Social Security Administration announced today that Kaiser Permanente, one of the nation's largest healthcare providers, will electronically transmit complete medical records for its patients to the agency with the appropriate consent. Social Security requests about 70,000 patient files from Kaiser Permanente each year so this seamless new system will save time and money for both partners as well as allow Social Security to make faster and more accurate decisions.

Over the last few years, Social Security had entered into similar agreements with several smaller providers to exchange medical records electronically over the Nationwide Health Information Network. Today's agreement marks the agency's first move into using health information technology on a large-scale basis.

"I am confident that people will look back at today's announcement as the most significant improvement in our disability determination process since the program began in 1956. In today's world it makes no sense for us to chase down paper records on an individual basis," said Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security. "We are thrilled that Kaiser Permanente is now one of our key agents for change."

"Kaiser Permanente is dedicated to supporting safe and secure health information exchange for members and our work with Social Security will enable our patients to obtain quicker disability decisions on their benefits," said Lisa Caplan, Kaiser Permanente's Senior Vice President and Business Information Officer. "We are delighted to be working with such an innovative agency."

More information on Social Security's use of health IT is available at www.socialsecurity.gov/hit.

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