

2009 HSI-TI Distinguished Lecture



The Surge in U.S. Health IT Spending: Research and Innovation Opportunities and Barriers

Rob Kolodner, MD

**Former National Coordinator for Health Information Technology,
Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS)**

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4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

**Christopher Klaus Advanced Computing Building
Suite 1116
266 Ferst Drive, Atlanta, GA**



The U.S. healthcare system is at a critical stage. There are widely diverse views about how to contain the spiraling costs while improving quality and safety and covering the un- and under-insured. One of the few areas of bipartisan agreement is that the pervasive use of health information technology (HIT) is an essential part of any successful health reform solution. Use of Electronic Health Records by U.S. health care providers is extremely low – under 20%. Also, Individuals are just beginning to use Personal Health Records to manage and improve their health status. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) included over \$40B of federal funding to be spent on HIT over the next 5 to 7 years. While these funds could serve to spur innovation, concerns have been raised that such a rapid infusion could simply solidify the hold by market leaders who may be using older, less nimble, more expensive solutions.

Dr. Kolodner will draw from his recent role as the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources and from his decades of experience in the Department of Veterans Affairs as physician and health IT leader in the Department of Veteran's Affairs.

Speaker's Bio: In September 2009 Dr. Robert Kolodner transitioned from the federal to the private sector to continue his work to improve the health and well being of individuals and communities worldwide by advancing the proliferation and rapid, collaborative evolution of health information technology (HIT) tools and solutions. From 2006 to April 2009, he served as the President's designated lead for the United States eHealth initiative as the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology in Office of the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). His responsibilities included developing, maintaining, and directing the implementation of a HIT strategic plan and directing related activities that were necessary to advance the nationwide adoption of person-centered, interoperable HIT solutions.

For 28 years prior to that, he was the key clinical champion in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) providing vision, direction, and effective leadership for the development and pervasive use of the VA's award-winning suite of HIT solutions, including My Health_eVet and VistA – the world's first successful development and large-scale implementation of a comprehensive Personal Health Record and Electronic Health Record System for Veterans.

He started his VA career at the Atlanta VA Medical Center, where he served as a psychiatrist from 1978 to 1985. Besides being an Assistant Professor in Psychiatry at the Emory University School of Medicine, he was also a liaison with the Georgia Institute of Technology in his roles as Medical Coordinator, Rehabilitation Research and Development (1980-1983) and Medical Coordinator, Health Services Research and Development (1982-1985) at the Atlanta VA.

Dr. Kolodner received his undergraduate degree from Harvard College, his medical degree from Yale University School of Medicine, and completed his psychiatric residency at the Washington University School of Medicine. He has medical specialty board certification in psychiatry.