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Study Finds Few Benefits from Health IT

Welcome to the Health Freedom Minute. This is Twila Brase, president of Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom.

Researchers looked at electronic medical records and other health IT applications and found little benefit. Let me repeat, little benefit.

The authors looked at 53 reviews of the evidence and said, “many of the clinical claims made about the most commonly deployed [digital health] technologies cannot be substantiated by the empirical evidence.”

They say benefits will come mostly from remote monitoring using email, phone or text messages. Only major centers showed some improvements in outcomes but their systems were carefully developed. The authors caution against investing lots of money into pre-fab systems. Yet the stimulus bill requires every doctor and hospital to have a digital system by 2014 or face penalties. Could it be that control, not care, is the intended outcome?

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