



WAL★MART®

www.walmartfacts.com

Good for America's Communities

Wal-Mart Partners with Major Employers on Electronic Health Records

Private, Portable and Personal Health Records to Bring Efficiency, Transparency to U.S. Health Care System

At Wal-Mart we are committed to bringing about **solutions to some of the most pressing health care challenges facing America's working families**. We've made this a major focus of the last year -- our more affordable health benefits improvements are a prime example. We are making a real difference for our associates, our customers and the communities we serve. And we are building on those efforts. That's why Wal-Mart, along with several other large employers who are concerned about the rising cost of health care and inefficiencies in the current system, are coming together to form Dossia, **a new non-profit organization that will provide a framework for electronic personal health records**.

About Electronic Personal Health Records:

- ✓ Electronic records allow individuals to manage an extensive and comprehensive record of their personal medical history and ultimately receive the best possible treatment. These records can help **eliminate duplicate medical tests, erroneous or lost information, reduce administrative costs and help prevent thousands of serious illnesses** or deaths that result from prescription or other medical errors every year. Because these records are electronic, there's no paperwork to lose and no files to transfer.
- ✓ For example, an associate and his or her doctor can review recent prescriptions and track office visits. Doctors can evaluate past x-rays, immunizations or screenings to make comprehensive decisions about the proper course of treatment, avoiding duplicate or unnecessary tests. A record of a patient's medical history will be available to them and to their doctor, **saving money and saving lives**.
- ✓ There has been a **tremendous amount of interest in the issue** of electronic medical records, and **hospital and doctor groups have long supported efforts to computerize medical records**. However, little progress has been made due to financial and technological constraints. As a result, today only a small percentage of doctors in the United States use a completely electronic record-keeping system.

About Dossia:

- ✓ Dossia is a first-of-its-kind collaboration between Wal-Mart and other employers, and it represents **an important first step toward bringing greater efficiency, quality and transparency to the U.S. health care system**. Dossia will provide Wal-Mart associates, and employees at other founding companies, with a framework through which they and their doctors can both build and maintain private electronic personal health records.
- ✓ Electronic health records provided through Dossia will be **personal, private and portable**. They will not be tied to an individual's employer or health care provider or to their software, which will provide choice and differentiation for employers and consumers. Individuals will own their personal health record, and can decide who, outside of their doctors, has access to their medical information.
- ✓ Employers **will not** have access to their employees' personal health record. Dossia is hosted by an independent not-for-profit institute, creating a barrier between employee data and outside parties -- including the founding employers of Dossia. Quite simply, Wal-Mart **will not** be able to view associates' medical records. They will be 100% private.



WAL★MART®

www.walmartfacts.com

Good for America's Communities

- ✓ In the initial stage of the program, founding members' employees will have access to this service. However, **over time it will be expanded to include more and more health care consumers.**
- ✓ Currently, Dossia's founding members include Wal-Mart, Intel, BP, Pitney Bowes and Allied Materials. **Together, employees at these firms represent about 2.5 million U.S. health care consumers.** Participation in Dossia is open to other employers interested in bringing electronic medical records to their employees and transparency and efficiency to the U.S. health care system.

What others are saying about the electronic personal health records:

- ✓ "Adopting and using health information technology **will reduce medical mistakes by making patient-specific information and the latest condition-specific information readily available** to treating providers at the point of care. We are rapidly approaching the time when health care organizations and providers must rely on information technology to be credible providers of safe, quality care." Helen Darling, President, National Business Group on Health, *Market Wire*, 4 October 2006
- ✓ "It has always seemed unusual to me that the medical record is seen as the property of the medical system. The **best integrator in the end is the patient.**" Donald Berwick, chief executive of the Institute for Health Care Improvement, *Wall Street Journal*, 29 November 2006
- ✓ "Greater transparency of cost and performance information will help consumers **make more informed decisions regarding their health care.** Additionally, adoption of health IT standards will further **improve health care quality, streamline inefficient processes and reduce costs** that are burdening our businesses." Karen Ignagni, president of America's Health Insurance Plans, *American Health Line*, 23 August 2006
- ✓ "Once in place, the [Dossia framework] would allow consumers and insurers to evaluate price and performance data from millions of employees. **Eliminating duplicate tests and erroneous or lost information would also slash administrative overhead, which is estimated to account for 40% of medical costs.** And electronic prescriptions alone could help prevent the 98,000 serious illnesses or deaths that result annually from prescription mistakes." – *Wall Street Journal*, "Big Employers Plan Electronic Health Records," Gary McWilliams, 29 November 2006
- ✓ "For far too long, **America made the mistake of investing little in health-related information technology.** It's long past time to move the entire nation towards health care that's truly systematic and working in sync with our information-age economy. **If we create a privacy-protected electronic medical record for every citizen who wants one, we'll not only save money, we'll save lives.**" Bill Frist, U.S. Senate Majority Leader, *The American Enterprise Magazine*, July/August 2006
- ✓ "Broad **adoption of health information technology that is interoperable is absolutely crucial** to providing patients with better care, at lower cost, and with less hassle." U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt, *US Fed News*, 26 October 2006

For more information about Wal-Mart's commitment to affordable health care, please visit www.walmartfacts.com or www.dossia.org.

###