An electronic health record (EHR) is more than a digital version of a patient’s paper chart.

EHRs are real-time, patient-centered records that make information available instantly and securely to authorized users. Most EHRs and related equipment have security features built in or provided as part of a service, but these features are not always configured or enabled properly. As the guardian of ePHI, it is up to you — along with your designated staff members — to learn about these basic features and ensure they are functioning and are updated when necessary. Healthcare organizations need to make protecting their EHRs from cyber threats a top priority in order to keep their patients safe and secure.

EHRS CAN:
- Contain a patient’s medical history, diagnoses, medications, treatment plans, immunization dates, allergies, radiology images, and laboratory and test results
- Allow access to evidence-based tools that providers can use to make decisions about a patient’s care
- Automate and streamline provider workflow

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EHRs have been proven to be useful for providers and patients alike, but what does that mean for ePHI cybersecurity protection? Increasing use of EHRs increases cyber risks to your patients. In the next section, you will find resources to help you better protect your patients from these risks.

**LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?**
Check out the below resources from across HHS!

**HHS 405(d) — Aligning Health Care Industry Security Approaches**
405(d) aims to enhance cybersecurity and align industry/sector approaches by developing best practices and mitigation strategies to attack the most concerning cyber threats facing the healthcare sector. The HICP Publication includes mitigation strategies that can protect against threats to EHRs. The 405(d) initiative develops a variety of resources that can help HPH organizations mitigate cyber risks.

**HHS — Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)**
The CMS pledges to put patients first in all its programs – Medicaid, Medicare, and the Health Insurance Exchanges. They provide meaningful information about quality and costs to be active health care consumers and include supporting innovative approaches to improving quality, accessibility, and affordability, while finding the best ways to use innovative technology to support patient-centered care.

**HHS — Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC)**
The ONC is at the forefront of the administration’s IT efforts and is a resource to the entire health system to support the adoption of health information technology and the promotion of nationwide, standards-based health information exchange to improve health care. The ONC website features many articles specific to the benefits and impacts of EHRs. Additionally, the Health IT Playbook can assist you with selecting, adopting, and optimizing workflow with an EHR.

**HHS — Office for Civil Rights (OCR)**
The OCR guide for small healthcare practices is intended to assist these practices in reassessing their existing health information security policies as they consider adopting and implementing emerging health information technology capabilities such as EHRs and electronic health information exchange.

**RESOURCES**
- CMS Home Page
- Certified Health Technology Interoperability Programs: 2015 Edition Certified Electronic Health Record Technology
- About ONC
- Guide to Privacy and Security of Electronic Health Information
- Privacy, Security, and Usability of EHRs
- HHS 405(d) — Aligning Health Care Industry Security Approaches
- HHS — Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
- HHS — Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC)
- HHS — Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

**BY THE NUMBERS**
- 94% of providers report that their EHR makes records accessible at a point of care.
- 88% report that their EHR produces clinical benefits for the practice.
- 75% of patients surveyed were happy their doctor used e-prescribing.
- 92% of patients surveyed were happy their doctor provided a secure, encrypted message.
- 92% of providers report that their EHR allows them to deliver better patient care.

**SOURCE:**
https://www.healthit.gov/topic/health-it-and-health-information-exchange-basics/improved-health-information-exchange

**SOURCE:**

**SOURCE:**