

# Google Cloud, The Harris Poll: Most physicians want widespread interoperability

Article

**New data:** Google Cloud's recently released research [finds](#) that nearly all physicians say interoperability should be a top priority for hospitals and health systems. Google Cloud and

The Harris Poll surveyed 303 physicians online in June 2020.

### Key findings:

- **96%** of physicians said easier access to clinical data would improve patient safety and could help save lives
- **95%** said increased interoperability would lead to better patient outcomes
- **86%** think better interoperability practices would enable faster diagnoses
- And **63%** say time-consuming, burdensome clinical data reporting workflows are their biggest pain point

**Where does Google Cloud fit in?** Google Cloud has been inching into the interoperability space in the last year to break down data sharing barriers and facilitate streamlined care.

- It launched the Google Cloud **Healthcare Interoperability Readiness Program** in November 2020, and struck a **\$100 million** healthcare cloud deal with telehealth giant **Amwell** (which works with over 2,000 hospitals and 55 health plans) in August 2020.
- Google Cloud boasts other large customers like health system HCA Healthcare, and health insurer Highmark Health.

**What's standing in the way?** Interoperability barriers not only slow clinicians down, but impede their ability to provide the best care possible.

Clinicians are often forced to hunt down data stuck in silos to gather a complete, actionable picture of a patient's health. Some electronic health record vendors and health systems lack enough incentive to share data with their competitors and instead practice information blocking—which can lead to wasteful healthcare costs, unnecessary care, and duplicate tests.

And in many cases, when data is exchanged, it isn't formatted in a way that is easily understandable by the clinicians receiving it—something the CMS is trying to tackle with its **Fast Health Interoperability Resources (FHIR) API** mandate, which would standardize the language of healthcare data.

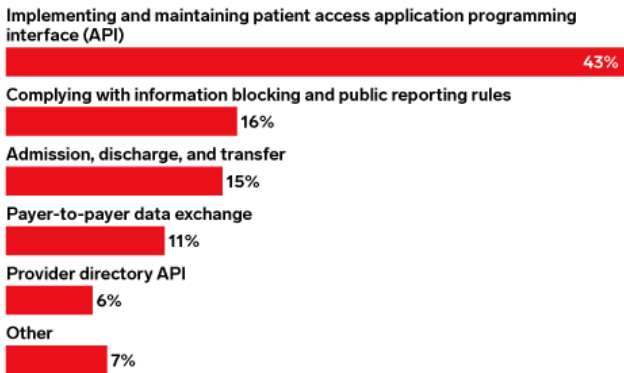
Even though the government has started to enforce interoperability policies like **The 21st Century Cures Act** and the CMS' Interoperability and Patient Access rule, there's a broad lack of readiness around these provisions:

- For example, a March [survey](#) of 4,000 healthcare leaders found that although **70% were aware** of the interoperability rules going into effect on April 5, **38% were not aware** that not following them could make them liable to penalties—and **66% were still using paper** to share healthcare data with patients.

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### Interoperability Areas US Healthcare Executives\* Are Most Concerned About, Sep 2020

% of respondents



Note: n=189; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding; \*includes providers, payers, and vendors  
Source: eHealth Initiative, "Readiness for the ONC and CMS Interoperability Rules," Nov 11, 2020

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