

# Healthcare Innovation NEWS

## Thought Leaders' Corner

### Q. What impact do you think the HITECH Act of 2009 has had on today's proliferation of healthcare technology and innovation?



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A 2014 Commonwealth Fund survey told us what we already knew or at least suspected: The United States ranks last in quality and efficiency when compared to healthcare systems in other developed countries. The HITECH Act was a noble attempt to accelerate the development of new standards and technology that would create a more connected, efficient and effective healthcare system in our country. But the problem is this: The spirit of the HITECH Act versus the reality of the HITECH Act has turned out to be very different.

The standards and regulatory requirements that came with the HITECH Act forced healthcare technology vendors to abandon most, if not all, product development plans and instead focus on certification standards and “checking off the boxes” for Meaningful Use. And yet as we assess our current situation almost exactly six years since the HITECH Act was signed, interoperability among healthcare vendors and systems is still a major issue.

Our healthcare community is full of people with deep expertise and excellent ideas, and if we can shift the focus back to innovation, everyone will benefit—hospitals, clinicians, vendors and most importantly, patients. It's an exciting time to be in healthcare in the United States. We have the opportunity to make a lasting impact through disruptive innovations that will change the course of U.S. healthcare and improve outcomes for future generations.