

RFK Jr. Promises Consumer Access To Personal Health Info Sold By Tech Companies

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HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. on Tuesday (Aug. 26) said he made an agreement with the 60 biggest technology companies to allow Americans to access their personal health data that has been monetized without their consent.

“You're going to be able to see by next year all of your health records on your cell phone,” he said during President Donald Trump’s latest cabinet meeting. “It’s going to save lives. It is going to fuel an infusion of technology into that space where people can access those records. They can compare their diet to what they personally need, and we’ll have personalized medicine.”

Kennedy’s promise comes as HHS recently updated its privacy FAQs that said some health information collected as part of the administration’s new sweeping digital health interoperability effort can be shared with entities in value-based care arrangements without a patient’s consent.

OCR released the updated Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) frequently asked questions in response to stakeholders' concerns about privacy protections within the Trump administration’s sweeping interoperability efforts. The new answers center on the type of health information patients are entitled to access and what data providers and business associates can disclose without patient authorization.

The Trump administration did not lay out specific protections for sensitive health information that falls outside of HIPAA in its ambitious interoperability pledge to make health records and data from apps and wearables seamlessly available to patients and providers, according to a lobbyist with knowledge of the administration’s internal efforts. Key data privacy stakeholders also say the involvement of technology giants may influence the program’s functions to disproportionately suit their needs, leaving small health industry groups behind.