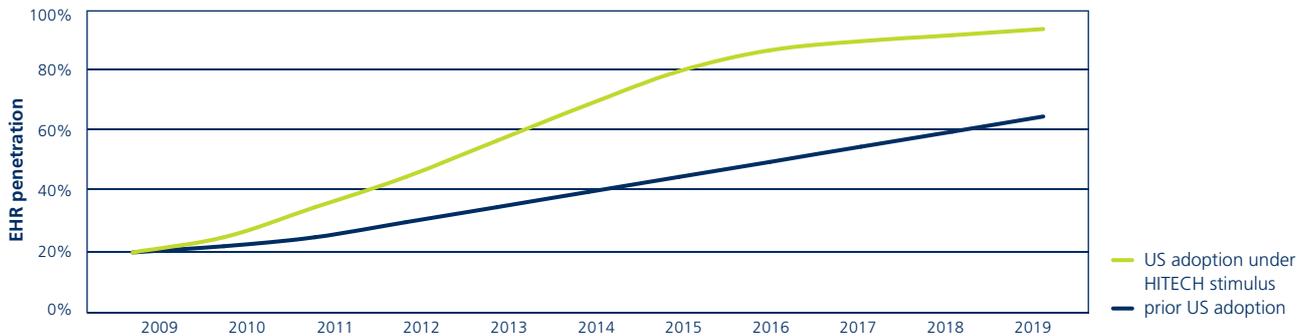


## IT solutions to increase healthcare efficiency eHealth



**FIGURE: ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS (EHR) PENETRATION IN THE US**

Source: CBO, Berenberg Bank, Frost & Sullivan, SAM

Around the globe, healthcare expenditure is increasing at an alarming rate. In some OECD countries, spending has already exceeded 11 % of GDP. Such high levels of expenditure are unsustainable, particularly in the context of current macroeconomic challenges. Besides introducing cuts to health spending, governments and policy makers are implementing major reforms to address healthcare system inefficiencies and are increasingly focusing on value-based healthcare<sup>1</sup>, i. e. the delivery of the best outcomes to patients at the lowest cost.

In order to develop value-based healthcare systems, broad adoption of interconnected, interoperable informatics systems is essential. Electronic Health Records (EHR) integrate financial, clinical and administrative management. They enable access to patients' medical histories, the exchange of medical information, monitoring of consultation costs, e-prescribing, verification of patient insurance status, and automated transmission of bills/claims to health insurers. By reducing errors, minimizing duplication of efforts and administrative inefficiencies, and by improving decision making, the large-scale implementation of EHR will be instrumental in improving quality of care and driving efficiency.

A number of government initiatives have emerged globally to promote widespread adoption and penetration of health IT. The most significant example is in the US, where the USD 19 billion stimulus found under the HITECH Act is expected to drive adoption of EHR from 20 % to more than 90 % by 2019, and result in more than USD 60 billion in savings.<sup>2,3</sup>

This increased government focus on healthcare efficiency in developed countries – coupled with large investments in health infrastructure in emerging markets – will fuel strong growth in the healthcare IT market, which is projected to grow from USD 100 billion in 2010 to USD 162 billion by 2015.<sup>4</sup> Companies like McKesson, Cerner, and CompuGroup are well positioned to reap the benefits from this trend, as their solutions are essential for the development of sustainable healthcare systems.

“Healthcare IT companies are best positioned to reap the benefits from the shift towards value-based healthcare systems, as they play an instrumental role in improving both healthcare efficiency and patient outcomes.”



**Giorgia Valsesia, PhD**  
Analyst SAM Sustainable  
Healthy Living Strategy

<sup>1</sup> Porter M. (2009). A strategy for health care reform – Toward a value-based system. *New England Journal of Medicine* 361 (2).

<sup>2</sup> athenahealth – A summary of the HITECH Act White paper

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Congressional Budget Office, <http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/ftpdocs/99xx/doc9966/hitechrangelltr.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Markets and Markets

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