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South Dakota Senator: Health IT Can Boost Care Quality, Access

Despite partisan politics that overshadow some efforts to increase "access to affordable, high-quality care, expanding access to effective health care technologies has been one area of agreement," Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.) writes in a [Meade County Times-Tribune](#) opinion piece.

Electronic health records and telehealth can reduce medical errors and increase access to specialized care in "rural states like South Dakota," Thune writes.

The South Dakota eHealth Collaborative "has taken the lead in creating a network to electronically share medical information and improve patient care across South Dakota," according to Thune. He also touted the state's use of telemedicine to boost access and quality of care.

"Congress can take several common-sense steps to improve the quality of health care while reducing the cost to patients by embracing the use of effective" IT, Thune writes. He concludes, "I am excited to see South Dakota health care providers at the leading edge of improving access to health information and services through technology" (Thune, *Meade County Times-Tribune*, 6/17).

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