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Report to the President on [Transforming Health Care Through Information Technology](#), February 9, 2001

Media Advisory

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**Contact: Carolyn Van Damme
703-292-4873**

**President's Information Technology Advisory Committee
Issues Three Groundbreaking Reports on
Healthcare, Learning and Digital Libraries**

The President's Information Technology Advisory Committee (PITAC) released three new reports today as part of its follow-on series to the PITAC's February 1999 report, *Information Technology Research: Investing in Our Future*. These three reports take on two difficult issues of national importance, health care and education. In these reports, *Transforming Health Care Through Information Technology*; *Digital Libraries: Universal Access to Human Knowledge*; and *Using Information Technology To Transform the Way We Learn*, the PITAC offers recommendations for using information technology to make health care, digital libraries and learning more efficient, effective, and accessible.

In ***Transforming Health Care Through Information Technology*** the PITAC offers six key recommendations that could significantly expand access to health care, improve its quality, reduce its costs, and transform the conduct of biomedical research. The PITAC sees these recommendations as critical steps toward addressing the challenges that exist to improving Americans' health and health care:

- Establish pilot projects and Enabling Technology centers to extend the practical uses of information technology to health care systems and biomedical research;
- NIH, in close collaboration with NSF, DARPA, and DOE, should design and deploy a scalable national computing and information infrastructure to support the biomedical research community;
- Congress should enhance existing privacy rules by enacting legislation that assures sound practices for managing personally identifiable health information;

- Establish programs to increase the pool of biomedical research and health care professionals with training at the intersection of health and information technology;
- DHHS should outline its vision for using IT to improve health care and subsequently devote the resources to conduct the IT research critical to accomplishing these goals in the long term; and
- DHHS should appoint a senior information technology leader to provide strategic leadership across DHHS and focus on the importance of information technology in addressing pressing problems in health care.

PITAC members Sherrilynne S. Fuller, Ph.D., Head, Division of Biomedical and Health Informatics, Department of Medical Education, School of Medicine at University of Washington and Edward H. Shortliffe, M.D., Ph.D., Professor and Chair, Department of Medical Informatics, College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University, co-chaired the panel that authored this report.

In the second report, ***Digital Libraries: Universal Access to Human Knowledge***, the Committee offers its findings and recommendations for how digital libraries can be an essential resource for human learning and development. The PITAC offers four key recommendations that will make digital libraries more pervasive and usable by all citizens:

- Expanded research in metadata and metadata use, scalability, interoperability, archival storage and preservation, intellectual property rights, privacy and security, and human use
- Create several Federally funded large-scale digital library testbeds
- Provide Federal funding to make all public Federal content persistently available in digital form on the Internet
- Have the Federal government play a leadership role in evolving policy to fairly address intellectual property rights in the digital age

The PITAC strongly believes that these recommendations can help move this Nation toward realizing the enormously powerful vision of anytime, anywhere access to the best of human thought and culture, so that no classroom or individual is isolated from knowledge resources.

PITAC member David Nagel, President, AT&T Labs, chaired the panel that authored this report.

Using Information Technology to Transform the Way We Learn highlights PITAC's findings and recommendations on how the Federal government can provide the leadership needed to solve key information technology challenges and to improve the quality of, and public access to educational and training experiences. The overarching recommendation in this report calls for the Federal government to make

the integration of information technology with education and training a national priority. In addition, the Federal government should:

- Establish and coordinate a major research initiative for information technology in education and training
- Establish focused government-industry-foundation partnerships to aggressively pursue the information technology research program
- Develop programs that enable educators and related professionals to use information technology effectively
- Work with industry and academia to develop technical standards for extendable component-based technologies and infrastructures that can be widely used in online education and training

PITAC members Susan L. Graham, Ph.D., Chancellor's Professor of Computer Science at University of California, Berkeley, and Andrew J. Viterbi, Ph.D., President, The Viterbi Group, co-chaired the panel that authored this report.

The PITAC believes that the recommendations in these reports offer this country a path to better harness the potential of information technology, and bring the benefits of information technology to its citizens. The PITAC, a body of top IT experts from private industry and the research and education communities, advises the President and the Office of Science and Technology Policy on all areas related to high performance computing and communications and information technologies. The Committee is co-chaired by Irving Wladawsky-Berger, Vice President for Technology and Strategy for IBM's Enterprise Systems Group, and Raj Reddy, Herbert A. Simon University Professor of Computer Science and Robotics at Carnegie Mellon University.

Copies of these reports can be obtained from the National Coordination Office for Information Technology Research and Development at (703) 292-ITRD (4873) or via their website <http://www.nitrd.gov>.