New federal health care standards set

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The Bush administration is putting the final touches on a plan designed to increase the quality of medical care and stem the rate of inflation for health care.

Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt says the plan involves requiring all providers of federally financed health care to join the government in standardizing information technology, the Washington Post reports.

In addition, Leavitt says the providers will have to set standards for care of specific health problems and develop uniform methods of measuring and reporting treatment outcomes.

Those requirements will be part of an executive order President Bush will sign in a matter of weeks, Leavitt told the annual meeting of the National Governor's Association on Sunday.

He said the new standards would provide the foundation for a future system in which patients could make more informed decisions about where to go for medical treatment and what the treatment will cost.

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