



FCC to examine challenges to wireless medical devices

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By Brendan Sasso

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) officials will meet with leaders in the medical community on Wednesday to discuss challenges to implementing wireless medical devices.

FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski will deliver remarks ahead of the meeting.

He will be joined by senior executives from Philips, Qualcomm, and Medtronic, as well as startups such as MedApps, Telcare, TheCarrot, and WellDoc.

Officials from the Food and Drug Administration, Health and Human Services Department, Veterans Affairs and the National Institutes of Health.

Challenges to wireless medical devices include maintaining reliable connectivity, ensuring interoperability between different devices and preventing interference.

The FCC cited a study showing that mobile medical devices could save as much as \$197 billion over the next 25 years while improving patient care.

The FCC voted last month to set aside radio frequency spectrum for wireless medical devices that can monitor a patient's body, known as Medical Area Body Networks (MBANs).

The vote made the United States the first country to set aside spectrum for the devices.

The low-powered sensors allow doctors to remotely monitor a patients' medical data, such as temperature, respiratory function or blood glucose levels, in real time. The technology could allow more patients to receive medial care at home.