National systems of patient unique identifiers – nations pro and against

Unique identifiers for patient records are one of the main infrastructure elements underlying Big Data initiatives.
In the English NHS, the NHS number is now a standard for all its health IT. It was reported in March this year that “a bill to mandate the use of a common patient identifier across the health and social care system is set to become law”, to extend the use across the social care systems (more information on the Bill here).

On the other side of the Atlantic, it seems that Congress instead opposes the mandate of unique identifiers at national level, as reported today (10th April) in: “Congress Continues to Block Nationwide Unique Patient Identifier” (Health Data Management website).