

Proposal



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Healthcare Information Technology Term Paper Proposal Proposed Topic and

Rationale: This topic centers around efficiency and quality of emergency room care. Many times, the waits at an ER can be hours long, and much of this is due to a lack of intake staff and nurses. Care could be greatly improved if the wait times were reduced, as there are many seemingly mild symptoms that could escalate if not treated promptly. Therefore, I am proposing to examine the feasibility of using kiosk-style stations where the patients could check themselves in when they enter the ER, very similar to those seen at an airport. This would act to speed up the lengthy intake process. These kiosks would be set up to gather at the very least the patient's name, insurance coverage, and any allergies or chronic conditions. This could help reduce the amount of time a nurse must spend with the patient just to collect background information, and therefore moves the patient to the doctor sooner for treatment or discharge. These kiosks could also be linked to the patient's electronic medical record. Ideally, these kiosks would be able to take a history of symptoms through the use of condition or symptom specific questionnaires. In this way, these kiosks would be able to assist with the triage process by alerting a charge nurse of any particularly worrying symptoms more quickly than they might otherwise have been noticed. The use of these kiosks to perform triage for milder symptoms would also free up the nursing staff to deal with patients who come in with more serious injuries and illnesses, or for whatever reason are unable to make use of the kiosks. This division of labor between man and machine could even make it possible for the ER to have fewer nurses on staff without detrimental effects on the quality of care. Another possible use for these kiosks would be to keep track of patients after they have been moved to

treatment. This would allow friends and family who arrive later to locate their patient quickly and efficiently. A possible solution to the obvious privacy issues this would bring would be to have the patient give the names of the people who might come in while they are filling out the questionnaires.

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