

Module two:
investigate the extent
to which rhios or hies
exist in your state
or ...



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The paper "Extent to Which Regional Health Information Organizations Exist in the Community" is a persuasive example of a term paper on health sciences & medicine. RHIOs represent Regional Health Information Organizations. These are organizations that comprise many stakeholders who have a duty to motivate and enhance the acquisition and exchange of healthcare information Maffei et al. (2009). The application of information technology through RHIOs has promoted the value, safety, and effectiveness of healthcare to the community. The membership of RHIOs is wide-ranging. It comprises hospitals which are the majority, healthcare societies as well as employers. The RHIO has made it possible to exchange information between different healthcare information systems of various healthcare organizations. The electronic information exchange has significantly reduced the cost of accessing healthcare information as well as access to the community to quality healthcare. Clinical data and test results are the most exchanged information among the organizations. This is an indication that they have not gone as far in regard to the goals of RHIOs, which is attributed to underfunding.

Sustainability

The sustainability of RHIOs depends on accessibility to funding. This is because the inter-organizational systems needed are expensive to maintain and they require constant upgrading. It, therefore, remains unclear when it will be widespread in the entire community. There are various roles and goals that the RHIOs pursue to accomplish sustainability. They try to educate the community regarding their mission in healthcare as well as the significance of engaging in RHIO. They tend to link the community with the

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organizations as well as patients in the community whose data has been found to be useful in assisting healthcare providers to predict the outcomes of similar cases. Nevertheless, the RHO in this community has not been in a position to establish a strong foundation since the various stakeholders have not pledged their full participation in enhancing its sustainability.

Governance Structure and Financing Model

The governance structure of the RHIO comprises of people representing their class of membership. The governing body comprises representatives of healthcare providers, general practitioners, medical groups, public health agencies, public representatives as well as employers. Each group is represented by two people who are selected on the basis of their leadership ability and their eminence in the community. This structure is based on the fact that people understand their healthcare needs and they make rational decisions regarding their own welfare.

The not-for-profit status is the financial model that has been adopted by the RHIO. This strategy has helped the organization to be exempted from tax, which has had positive impacts on its funding. The special tax credits have a significant effect on the organizations' finances. Moreover, the organization has been receiving donations and in-kind support from supporters who value the nature of information exchange. For example, some companies have been providing personnel on loan status to assist in developing the healthcare information systems.

Equipment and other assets have also been donated by profitable organizations to the RHIOs. This has been a continuous process that has enabled the organization to acquire property to enhance its operations. The

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government has also been assisting indirectly through awarding health information contracts to the organization. Annual membership contributions have also been a significant source of funding although it is not substantial. Generally, 70% of the funding comes from grants, 20% from government contracts and 10% from membership contribution.

Current Status

The RHIO has almost completed its formative stages. The process of establishing the most appropriate governance structure and financial model has taken a considerable amount of time. Nevertheless, this process is important since it determines the RHIO's sustainability. The RHIO has managed to do several pilot projects with the assistance of the government and it is expected that with the current developments in Information Technology, healthcare costs will go down since information exchange has been made easier.