Literature review on o contact information

Personal Health Records

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Personal health records (PHRs) are collections of information related to a person's health that are generally maintained by the individual patient or consumer (Mayo Clinic, 2011). PHRs can be provided by many sources, including hospitals, physicians, corporate vendors, employers, insurers, or the government. PHRs have been praised as a tool that could greatly enhance the quality of medical care provided, because critical background information could be immediately available about a patient (Mayo Clinic, 2011). However, it remains that for the general population, adoption of PHRs is far from universal, with an estimated 7% user rate, according to a 2011 survey. Although there is interest in the use of PHRs, consumers have been slow to adopt the technology, citing failure to see advantages and security concerns (Lewis, 2011).

Introduced in 2003, one example of a provider of a PHR system is the Veteran's Administration, which developed a PHR service called My HealtheVet (U. S. Dept. of Veteran's Affairs, n. d.). The features of this health record site are provided in Table 1, which was taken from a published study by Dr. Kim Nazi aimed at measuring satisfaction with my HealtheVet product (2010). The entire table is reproduced from this publication to show the comprehensive nature of the PHR provided by the My HealtheVet website as available in 2010. Nazi notes that the most commonly used features of the site were prescription filling and prescription history (Nazi, 2010). Since that time, several popular features including the ability to set, see, and alter medical appointments with the VA, as well as secure messaging to a VA

medical team have been added (U. S. Dept. of VA, n. d.). In contrast to the general population usage of PHRs, recent data shows that myHealtheVet has 996, 000 premium registered users, approximately 18% of the users of the VA medical system (Rivera, 2013).

As a medical professional, it is straightforward to see the usefulness of a PHR, as availability of up-to-date medical records are an integral part of my profession and a help to accomplishing my job effectively. This is particularly true if a patient has an ongoing, chronic health condition that needs monitoring and this usefulness may be clear to the patient as well, supporting the use of a PHR. However, for an average healthy consumer, a PHR would require significant upfront attention, and then be useful in only in isolated instances, such as emergency situations or periodic need to access medical records. As medical emergencies are not generally contemplated as likely by healthy people, it makes sense that consumers are having difficulty in seeing the benefits of a PHR. This attitude may also be influenced by the relative ease of use of a particular system including the ability to port records in and out of it as needed. In contrast, the experience with My HeatheVet by the VA has shown that if the system impacts day-to-day medical tasks and needs, such as easy prescription filling or easy communications with healthcare professionals, the system is much more utilized.

Therefore it appears that in order to be widely accepted, PHR systems need to make improve the consumer's easy access to common medical services such as prescription filling, appointment setting, or doctor communications, providing more immediate personal rewards for use of the system. It appears

that mere medical record access is not compelling enough to overcome the initial time investment and possible record compatibility issues for an average healthcare consumer to use a PHR. By focusing on the digital services that consumers seem to prefer, it may be possible to not only have the PHR used for what helps the patient in their use of medical services, but also have quick access to medical records, something that helps the medical professional, like me, do their job.

- Health Education Resources – Browse or search trusted health education libraries
- Health Information Card – Print selected personal and medical information on a pre-formatted wallet card for a convenient reference
- Military Health History – Record important events from military service including assignments related to health history, potential exposures, and treatments
- Personal Health History – Record important health history information and events
- Family Health History – Record family member's health history and events that may affect health
- Personal Health Summary – Select information to print out as a personal health summary report to share with providers.
- Health eLogs – Track and generate a graph for common health measures:
o Blood Pressure
o Blood Sugar
o Cholesterol (Lipids Profile)
o Body Temperature

o Body Weight

o Heart Rate

o Pain

o Pulse Oximetry

o INR (International Normalized Ratio)

- Medications, over-the-counter drugs, herbals and supplements – Record the name, starting and ending date, prescription number, and dosage

- Allergies – Keep track of allergies by date, severity, reaction, diagnosis, and add comments

- Tests – Keep track of tests by test name, date of test, location where the test was performed, provider's name, results, and add comments

- Medical Events – Keep track of illnesses, accidents or other events by logging their date, treatment prescribed, or comments regarding the event

- Immunizations – Record the immunization, date received, method used, and any reactions

- Food Journal – Record food intake to monitor diet or control weight

- Activity Journal – Keep track of exercise routines

- Prescription Refills – Request refills for VA prescriptions online

- Prescription History – View a record of VA prescriptions

- My Complete Medications – View and print a complete summary of both VA and self-entered medications

- Wellness Reminders – View customized reminders for preventative care and health screens

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