

# Health information technology in china

Technology



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Health Information Technology was an Important part in the medical reform plan, and began to develop in the mid-90s with the financial management system because healthcare was provided by fee-for-service in hospitals. After five years the technology was applied to the clinical system. Beyond all doubt, China made huge progress in such a short period. However, China's HIT still faces huge challenges and problems because of the weak software application and lack of professional technical assistance.

The health application software in China fell behind other countries. And most of them only upgraded after several years and therefore lacked practicability. Moreover, even now China is chronically short of experts in the HIT area. Admittedly, the development of HIT application has only just started in China's hospital. Therefore, HIT experts lack experience in managing the whole Information system. In this paper. We discuss the Importance of Health Information Technology In China, Its adoption and the government policy.

Furthermore, the future direction will be explored through the current IT situation as it exists in healthcare system. China is the most rapidly developing economy in the world. However, its healthcare system has fallen behind. Developing HIT is essential in creating an effective healthcare system. Health Information Technology In china The Chinese medical system faces a series of critical issues - unaffordable hospitalizing costs, unbalanced regional development, medical safety and low insurance coverage rate.

Medical dispute happen frequently due to institutional deficiencies. The number of " grave incidents" has grown sharply in recent years. Therefore,

people place more trust on general hospitals in the mall cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou which provide better medical equipment, technology and services than community hospital with basic health infrastructures. However, some of the people have difficulty in meeting the expensive health cost.

Although the Chinese public hope to have better health services, higher security and lower cost, nowadays the Chinese medical system cannot satisfy them due to the inadequacies in the healthcare system. In their 2010 study, Chen, Chen, Qiu, Li, Ren, et al. (2010) concluded that improving medical facilities in only major hospitals was not devoting more attention to upgrading primary healthcare services in both urban and rural area.

The latest medical reform plan which will allocate 124 billion dollars was released by the government on April 6, 2009 (Chen, Chen, Qiu, Li, Ren, et al., 2010). Medical information systems are regarded as a critical component for improving the current situation of Chinese medical system. They also stated that regional medical information platform construction is considered a key component of e-health and regional collaborative medical service (ARCS), now playing an ever more important part in this reform (Chen, Chen, Qiu, Li, Ren, et al., 2010).

Furthermore, according to Lou, Ghara and Li's study: China's hospital information systems over the past twenty years, have evolved from single-computer, single-user to departments and enterprise level management information systems; from silo accounting, drug dispensing and administration to clinical decision support systems and the electronic

medical records; from applications within single hospitals to the regional ERR solutions (Lou, Ghana, Lie, 2010).

By focusing on the existing problem in which a huge difference exists between urban and rural health services, the current Health Informatics System will improve medical information integration and sharing.

Furthermore, treatment in rural hospitals would be upgraded with the assistance of Top Three hospital in the cities through resource sharing.

Based on the health information system, all the patient cases will be saved in the database.

The file which includes symptoms, diagnosis and therapy record provides a comprehensive reference for the physician who may be unfamiliar with diseases or be confused with new symptoms they have never encountered. As the biggest developed country with almost 14 hundred million citizens, China has its own special hardships building a perfect communication network due to a range of factors. However, with the application of Health Informatics System, the problems including huge population, immense land rear and urban-rural disparity in medical system can be effectively solved.

All physicians should loyally obey Hippocratic Oath - " I will keep them from harm and is a basic principle as a doctor or nurse. They are responsible for healing the wounded and rescuing the dying. Also, the " angel in white" shoulders the duty of patient's safety. To achieve the goal of improving patients' security, Health Information Technology plays an important role in enhancing the quality of health services and treatment.

Maid, Helms and Moore (2008) found that in the United States, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations established the Healthcare Information Technology Advisory Panel in 2005 to focus attention on the improvement of patient safety and clinical processes as new healthcare information systems are implemented (Maid, Helms, Moore, 2008). Compared with America, China remains below the average. Bates (1999) obtained an outcome in his study that computerized Physician Order Entry (COPE) systems reduce medication errors by 80%, and errors with serious potential patient harm by 55% (as cited in Maid et al. 2008). In China Health Information Technology is mainly applied to the financial and clinical system which is still developing slowly. In fact, the software in hospitals still request upgrading and lacks practical application. According to YK's China HIT Case Study, Chinese software vendors are not as experienced in healthcare applications as foreign vendors (You, 2007). Furthermore, system steadily. This means the Health Information System which initially displayed great promise, soon deteriorated so that it cannot effectively impact on the Chinese Health Reform.

Although the Health Department in China is concerned about the informational of healthcare industry, they must work step by step. Chinese people emphasize efficiency when they work on everything and slow progress is not tolerated. Nonetheless, Health Information Technology is a long-term construction project with excessive expenses in the first few years. Anxiety for success and lack of patient make it less possible to advance Health Information Technology in China. The cost of Health Information Technology in China has grown dramatically over years.

The recent goals for the government are to further improve the regional network, the electric medical record database and the software. The most important part is raising qualified personnel including skilled professionals and management experts. Huh, Sun and Lie (2013), the professors of Department of Medical Informatics in Central South University concluded that an increased awareness of the need for health and medical informatics professionals has encouraged universities to develop specialized education programs in medical informatics (Huh, Sun, Lie, 2013).

The universities in China began to realize the importance of education on Health Informatics which would contribute a lot in the health care area in the future. In Chinese medical universities and colleges, the Computer Application and Medical Information System should be studied as required courses. Students will have basic knowledge but still fall short of the professional level. Therefore, the Health Informatics Program has become more and more popular in recent years in order to satisfy the trend that the Health Information Technology occupies an important place in the whole China Health Reform.

Generally, the development of medical informatics education would be a good beginning for training for professionals to alleviate the talent crisis. The program would encourage student to acquire knowledge about Health Informatics more comprehensively. We cannot avoid the social phenomenon that most of the prospective students give preference to the financial or economic specialty base on the employment environment in China. Career prospects will be a major consideration for every student and their parents before enter the universities.

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In other words, social status and salary are the main element for people to choose the major. It's no doubt that the Health Informatics program will be much more popular with the development of Health Information Technology. However, we should acknowledge that the professionals are still underrepresented in the Chinese society. That's another reason why we suffer the shortage of talents in the health information area. The Health Information Technology would be used widely in China.