

# Opposing electronic medical records



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Opposing Electronic Medical Records There are serious concerns about the implementation of the Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) as many physicians still prefer using the paper health records. It is actually not unusual for the EMRs to face certain obstacles and barriers in its implementation as it is relatively new to the paper health records (McDonald, 1997). These physicians claim that they have problems related with costs, data entry, technicalities, usability, and confidentiality of information and the security of the EMRs. These have generated heated debate about the usefulness of the EMRs as it has not really found acceptance within the ranks of some physicians.

The costs of procuring EMRs are relatively high when compared to the cost for using the paper health records. The startup cost of procuring the EMRs is rather high and this means that organizations with low budgets would have to pay through their noses in order to make it their primary source of keeping medical records. Instead of procuring these rather expensive EHRs, these organizations would definitely prefer the option of using the paper health records and would have more money to use for other projects.

The ease of entering the data in the paper health records when compared with the difficulties faced by health personnel in making entries on the EHRs has made the use of EHRs to be unpopular in the area of medical records. “ Technology has continued to move forward at a rapid pace, but many organizational and human issues have slowed the pace of implementation of automated systems for an electronic documentation record” (Young, 2000, p. 106). Different organizations and health personnel have issues with the use of the EMRs in keeping medical records and would rather prefer the use of paper health records considering the ease of use.

The technicalities involved in the use of the EHRs have also made physicians to opt for the use of paper health records. One of the problems with the EMR technology is the “ physician resistance to emerging and often unfamiliar technology.” (Iyer, Levin, & Shea, 2006, p. 314). It is necessary for the users of the EHRs to have some form of technical knowledge as this would guarantee that they would not make errors that would hamper the documentation process. The fear of errors and the other technical problems that are associated with the use of the EHRs is a problem that is making physicians to prefer the paper health records.

Most EHRs are not user-friendly and these would definitely affect the implementation of the information system (Young, 2000). The intricacies involved in the usability of the system have made physicians to prefer the use of the paper health records. It is apparent that the manufacturers of the EHR systems did not consider the needs of the users before designing the information system and until this is done, there would still be problems associated with its usage. Physicians must be able to retrieve information and data easily as this would save time and it is the creation of these easy data retrieval tools that would make the EHRs to be gain a wide acceptance by physicians.

The fact that there is no real security policy to guarantee the safety of the EMRs is something that is actually an obstacle to the use of the EMRs in the documentation processes. There are no security policies that shape the EMRs technology and these have made its use to attract criticisms in several quarters. There must be stringent security policies that guides the people that are permitted the information and records stored by the EMRs and these are problems that the EMR companies must solve in order to make the use of

the technology to gain wide acceptance, not only by the physicians, but also by the people that have their records on the information system (Rodnick, 1990).

Though, there are some advantages associated with the use of the EHRs in keeping medical records (Wager, Ornstein & Jenkins, 1997), but there are still some problems associated with its use. The acceptance of EMRs would be largely dependent on the ability of the EMRs companies to solve the problems associated with its implementation.

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