

Faculty Research Grant
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Political Environment Surrounding the Implementation
of an Electronic Health Record

Problem Researched:

The purpose of this project is to review the political environment encompassing the implementation of an electronic health record system as well as discussion of the benefits and drawbacks.

Research Procedure Utilized:

An extensive review of literature was performed to include seminal works as well as emerging political factions behind the implementation of electronic health records. Personal interviews were also held with a vendor and consultant of an electronic health record system as well as a government relation specialist in the field of health information technology. An undergraduate health information management class was also involved in the collection of data regarding the implementation of electronic health records in the state of Arkansas. This was done in the form of a survey sent to each director of health information management in the state.

Summary of Findings:

Very few healthcare facilities, both on a state as well as a national level have implemented electronic health records. Cost is the major factor in not implementing such a system.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

While very few electronic health record systems have been implemented to date, there has been a national mandate through President Bush to implement such a system within the next few years. There are many hurdles to overcome if a national health information system is to be put in place in the near future. However, further investigation, particularly in the area of funding alternatives needs to be pursued. The benefits of an electronic system may potentially revolutionize the health care delivery of Americans. This is an area that warrants further investigation.

Running head: POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT SURROUNDING THE EHR

Political Environment Surrounding the
Implementation of an Electronic Health Record
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Abstract

The healthcare delivery system in the United States has been in need of major reform for many years. None of the attempts at major transformation seem to ever work. At the same time, information technology has advanced at a great pace. It appears to be most evident in industries other than healthcare. With information available globally in retailing, banking and other businesses, it is thought by many that this use of technology in the healthcare field may be just the reform needed to transform healthcare into the high quality industry it should be. In particular, the electronic health record (EHR) is set to link all aspects of patient information to provide for the best possible continuity of care in a seamless fashion. The purpose of this paper is to look at the political environment encompassing the implementation of such a system as well as discussion of the benefits and drawbacks.

Looking Through The EHR Crystal Ball

Melinda A. Wilkins, M.Ed., RHIA
ArHIMA State Convention
April 28, 2005



What's in a Name???

- EHR – electronic health record
- EMR – electronic medical record
- CHR – complete health record
- CMR – complete medical record
- Soft health record
- Legal health record
- CCR – Continuity of care record
- ???????



Need for a Standard Definition

- AHIMA Workgroup
- Knowledge management/clinical decision support
- What parts are included? Not included?



Institute of Medicine Definition:

An EHR system includes:

- (1) longitudinal collection of electronic health information for and about persons, where health information is defined as information pertaining to the health of an individual or health care provided to an individual;

IOM Definition, continued

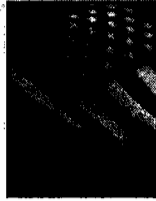
- (2) immediate electronic access to person- and population-level information by authorized, and only authorized, users;
- (3) provision of knowledge and decision-support that enhance the quality, safety, and efficiency of patient care; and
- (4) support of efficient processes for health care delivery.



Federal Initiative

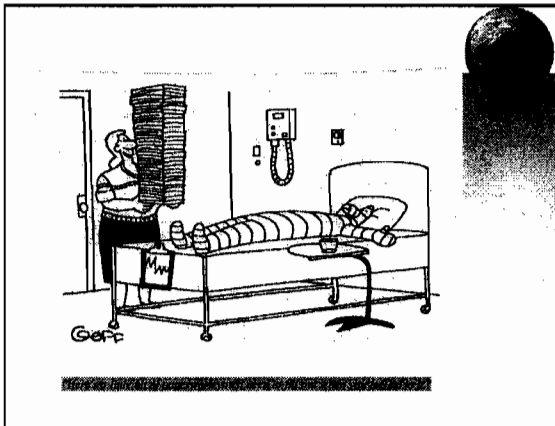
April 2004 - President Bush unveils tech initiatives, including electronic health records for every American within the next 10 years

Dr. David Brailer - Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONCHIT)



The Markle Foundation

- A non-proprietary framework should be developed to allow all participants to share information
- Any financial barriers will need to be overcome, perhaps through incentives with emphasis on standards certification and the improvement of quality of healthcare provided.
- American citizens will need to be brought into the realm of the equation to help consumers feel comfortable with a new way to access their information.



Dr. Brailer's Goals

- Inform clinical practice
- Interconnect clinicians
- Personalize care ("consumer-centric" information)
- Improve population health

Strategies to Achieve The Goals

- Provide incentives of EHR adoption
- Reduce the risk of EHR investment
- Promote EHR diffusion in rural and underserved areas
- Foster regional collaboration for interconnection
- Develop a national health information network
- Coordinate federal health information systems

Strategies to Achieve The Goals

- Encourage the use of personal health records (PHRs)
- Enhance informed consumer choice
- Promote the use of telehealth systems
- Unify public health surveillance architecture
- Streamline quality and health status monitoring
- Accelerate research and dissemination of evidence

Noteworthy Legislation

- S.544 Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act
- H.R.747 National Health Information Infrastructure Incentives Act
- 21st Century Health Information Act/Josie King Act
- Others to be determined

Benefits of the EHR

- Unified repository of healthcare information
- Information accessible from multiple sites
- More efficient communication between healthcare providers
- Cross-patient retrievals
- Better defined policies and procedures
- Longitudinal health record

(According to ASTM "Standard Guide for Content and Structure of the Electronic Health Record", 2003)

Roadblocks of the EHR

- Cost
- Leadership
- Return on Investment (ROI)
- Vendors
- Deficits in public policy, standards, security and lack of a true definition
- Privacy/security concerns

Possible Financial Avenues

- Healthcare Information Technology (HIT) Revolving Loan Fund
- Grants
- Other?

National Implementation of EHR

- As reported by IT Executives (2002 data)
- 13% - fully operational EHR system
- 29% - no plans to implement EHR

Implementing the EHR in Arkansas

- Results of survey – April 2005

**Vision of the 21st Century Health
Care System – William Frist, M.D.**

- Patient-centered Care
- Consumer-driven Care
- Provider-friendly Care

Resources

- www.hhs.gov/onchit/framework/
- www.ahima.org – Body of Knowledge
- E-HIM Community of Practice
- www.himss.org
