**Electronic Health Records**

**Introduction**

Electronic Health Records (EHR) is the future of medical care globally. It refers to the electronic storage of patients data based on the medical history that is developed from the number of visits that they make to a given health facility (Sewell, 2016). They contain critical information such as personal details, progress notes, laboratory results, immunizations, and complications among others.  There is a general drive towards the implementation of EHR by hospitals from relevant stakeholders. For instance, insurance companies require the medical facilities to properly document all the treatments received by their beneficiaries before they can disburse compensation. Additionally, the government- through the Centre for Medical Services (CMS) - has enforced value-based reimbursement for people who use Medicaid and Medicare as health insurance.  To successfully implement the plan, the hospitals should have in place HER systems for faster transactions. To understand the significance of EHR in healthcare, it is important to define the rationale for this topic choice and the pros and cons of the system. The paper will also address the contribution of Informatics in the research process.

**Rationale for Topic Choice**

Despite the current emphasis on the transformational nature of EHR, some organizations in the healthcare sector have not adopted the technology in their firms. The reluctance comes from fears and the lack of adequate information about EHR. To succeed in the government’s goal of incorporating technology in health-related matters, however, these companies should be brought aboard by explaining to them the motivation of EHR in the health industry.

Firstly, EHR is expected to enhance the quality of medical care throughout the country. The provision of a range of information on patients’ health will help the doctors to make the right diagnoses on the condition. For instance, if a person is sick due to an allergic reaction to a drug, the records will help the physician to identify the ideal medicine and prescribe another to help in the elevation of the condition. Since the client’s information can be updated and viewed by different people at the clinic, EHR can be thought of as a data bank that helps to improve the efficiency of medical care.

Secondly, there is an international shift from paper to paperless working environment (Kelley, 2016). Previously, the patient’s records were stored in files that were marked with the same name. However, the retrieval process was quite exhaustive, and it took more than a day to get the information to the medical practitioner hence, interfered with the speedy performance of duties at the health centers.  Additionally, management spent a lot of time documenting information that is required by the insurance providers for reimbursement purposes. EHR provides a safer and better alternative of fulfilling the same objective. Moreover, the data contained in this system is not prone to loss or destruction by natural or human forces such as theft, fire, and water. Therefore, the healthcare hospitals are likely to have fewer delays or complications in obtaining money from providers.

Lastly, the parties need to know that EHR is mandatory for all health facilities. The Federal government is extremely keen on using technology in medical care and achieved this through the passage of health Information Technology for Clinical Health (HITECH) that sets the guideline for the adoption of the system in facilities. Therefore, resistance will not work as all companies operate in agreement with the government regulations. By exploring this topic, managers of healthcare facilities will identify the pros and cons of the system and how they can use it to achieve maximum benefits.

**Advantages and Disadvantages of EHR Topic**

Several benefits will accrue to the health care industry by highlighting the key issues associated with the EHR topic. Firstly, organizations can identify the pros of the system in organizations. Some of the advantages- as outlined in the research- are quality care, patient participation, better coordination, and risk management (McBride & Tietze, 2016). Accessibility to the medical information of patients provides a platform for medics to perform their duties more effectively hence, enhance the standards of care in the country. Additionally, the clients can be involved throughout the treatment process as they respond to queries designed to shed more light on their health status. EHR has also proven to be instrumental in the synchronization of operations in health facilities. Since all the data is shared with the relevant parties on an online platform, the participants can arrange and schedule the activities to be undertaken for better running of the facility.

Secondly, the report will help the organizations to acknowledge that the EHR system, like other software, has some short-comings, companies should seek to develop mitigating strategies to deal with the issues. Examples of these problems include data security, prohibitive costs, and interference with the workflows at the facility (Lipscomb, 2016). Since sensitive information about clients is stored in the server, there is a possibility that unauthorized parties may hack and use the data to serve their own interest. This may subject the facility to liabilities based on the severity of the problem. Additionally, when the firms take the first steps to adopting the EHR, the work processes are affected. For instance, employees may be required to attend training seminars to equip them with critical skills; their posts are left empty. As a result, the company may lose clients that do not receive the caring sort after due to staff shortage. Once the organizations are aware of these challenges before-head, they will have a chance to design plans to reduce the level of harm experienced as much as possible.

Additionally, the research creates a general awareness on the inevitability of EHR in the healthcare sector. Although most hospitals have started to use the EHR in their operations, they have not fully incorporated the system. Some facilities are worse off as they cannot afford or willingly refuse to evolve with the changing technology (Jarvis, 2016). However, this mentality can be changed as the paper proves that all the healthcare providers will be required to use EHR at some time in future. There is a legal and practical argument for this mentality. The former can be proved by the presence of legislations that state the importance of EHR in medical facilities, while the latter is the observed benefits enjoyed by the successful implementers of electronic records. The paper will make it clear that the hospitals should be proactive in introducing the EHR programs rather than waiting for ultimatums from the legal authority.

**Role of Informatics**

Informatics served a critical role in the research process in several ways. Firstly, it provided me with the ability to conduct literature review through internet navigation. Although EHR is not an unfamiliar term, it was important to get a more detailed definition from an authority document. The information sources also specified the benefits and disadvantages of EHR, data entered into the records, and its effects on the health sector as a whole.

Additionally, it was possible to type the research by utilizing basic computer skills. These competencies included switching the computer on and off, copy and paste, and switching between windows. Furthermore, content formatting such as the use of animations to make the presentation more appealing was also applicable. Fortunately, I did not have to use other software to gather information as I was quite proficient in Mozilla Firefox.

**Conclusion**

From the above discussion, it is evident that EHR will continue to drive change within the international health industry. Emphasis will be on the manipulation of existing and new technology to facilitate quality service delivery. However, to understand the occurrence of future changes, one must possess informatics skills that will be used in the research process.

**References**

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