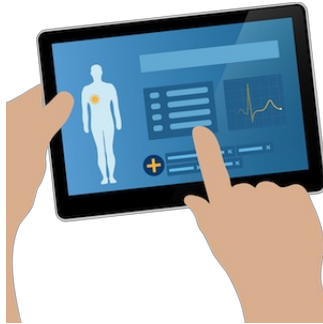## Doctors Pinpoint EHR Frustrations

The *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* has highlighted the features of EHRs that frustrate doctors so much.

It is a well-known fact that, for all of the benefits that EHRs bring to healthcare, many physicians find their use a frustrating experience.

The piece, written by MDs affiliated with the Stanford University School of Medicine and elsewhere was called "Evolutionary Pressures on the Electronic Health Record." It said that the evolution of EHRs has not kept up with technology "widely used to track, synthesise, and visualise information in many other domains of modern life."

Authors wrote that tools are not integrated in a manner that supports personalised treatment decisions for patients.

"Existing EHRs also have yet to seize one of the greatest opportunities of comprehensive record systems—learning from what happened to similar patients and summarizing that experience for the treating physician and the patient," they wrote.

The authors went on to write that the impressive developments in science and technology are not being employed in EHR use which has led to more burden rather than less on doctors.

"The dominant EHRs are designed for billing and not primarily for ease of use by those who provide care. In fact, a measure of successful EHR evolution may be that physicians spend much less time with the EHR than they do now," they said.

See Also: EHR Leading Physicians to Burnout, Low JobSatisfaction

Deimplementing the EHR could actively enhance care in many clinical scenarios, the authors wrote. "Simply listening to the history and carefully examining the patient who presents with a focused concern is an important means of avoiding diagnostic error."

The piece also focused on patients with multiple active health issues saying that EHRs can generate an overwhelming number of reminders, resulting in dangerous alert fatigue.

"Outside of healthcare, other sectors have found suitable solutions for this type of challenge: the airline industry limits pilots' audible alerts to critical and life-threatening events, and financial software enables users to set investment goals without inundating their inbox at every price fluctuation. Better triage of EHR alerts and fewer workflow interruptions are needed so the physician can maintain situational awareness without being distracted."

Growing doctor resentment with EHRs was also referred to in the article with claims that current records miss opportunities to harness available data and predictive analytics to individualise treatment. "Meanwhile, sophisticated advances in technology are going untapped. Better medical record systems are needed that are dissociated from billing, intuitive and helpful."

Source: HealthCare Informatics

Image Alert: Pixabay

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