
How will HIMSS Value Score for EHRs Work?



HIMSS Value Score is healthcare's first international quality measurement for the value of health IT. Launched in early December, the model will provide guidance to organisations seeking better strategies for turning their health IT investments into meaningful returns.

The Value Score can be a useful tool especially to providers who may not understand exactly how their health IT infrastructure is making a day-to-day difference, says Blain Newton, Senior VP and Chief Operating Officer at HIMSS Analytics.

Building on the success of the HIMSS Analytics EMR Adoption Model (EMRAM), the Value Score will help healthcare providers optimise and use IT to improve clinical and financial outcomes, and drive efficiencies in care.

Healthcare organisations are looking for guidance and help in understanding how to actually optimise and leverage their IT infrastructure to achieve value. "Whether that value is improved clinical outcomes, improved financial returns, or increased patient provider satisfaction and engagement, it really comes down to how you use these tools to maximise your return on the investment," Newton points out. "We need to start helping organisations move beyond adoption."

The Value Score aims to prepare healthcare organisations for the challenging pay-for-performance landscape ahead of them, according to Stephen Lieber, President and CEO of HIMSS.

"With the move towards value-based care, the international healthcare community can now look beyond initial adoption and toward a broader, all-encompassing way to measure the clinical and financial value of health IT," Lieber stated. "The Value Score is a combination of HIMSS' core competencies and is the natural next step in the continual evolution towards better care and outcomes for patients and providers."

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While the EMRAM tracks the number and type of systems that a certain organisation has implemented successfully, the Value Score's four sections judge how those tools are being put to good use. The two scales are technically independent of one another, but it will be hard to achieve high marks on the Value Score's baseline value element without a strong underlying infrastructure, Newton notes.

The Value Score is still in its pilot phase, and is being tested in real-world situations with the cooperation of a number of different care sites in the U.S. and around the world, including HIMSS' Davies Award winners and small critical access hospitals. As the metric is further refined, HIMSS will be able to provide more specifics about the technologies and competencies required to score highly.

The model is likely to include some familiar tools already gaining traction in the industry, Newton hinted, as well as emerging technologies and strategies that will keep the score relevant as providers continue to push the boundaries of health IT development.

"But there is still a lot of work to be done on the core EHR," he added. "While meaningful use has its supporters and detractors, I think we're seeing providers looking for ways to fine-tune and optimise the EHRs they've implemented to make it really useful for patient care. So there will be some metrics focused on those fundamentals, as well."

Source: HealthITAnalytics.com

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