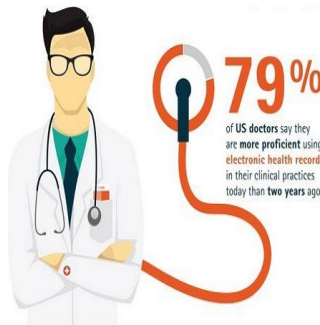

Survey: Increasing Use of Health IT Among Doctors



Physicians have become more proficient with electronic health records (EHRs) and are increasingly using healthcare IT functions that help them provide quality patient care. These are among the key findings of Accenture's latest online survey covering 2,619 doctors in Australia, Brazil, England, Norway, Singapore and the U.S.


Doctors' routine use of all surveyed healthcare IT functions is on the rise. These functions include:

- Communicating electronically with patients
- Electronic notification of patients' interactions with other health organisations
- Computerised clinical decision-support systems
- Electronically sending prescriptions to pharmacies (e-prescribing)
- Electronically sending order requests to laboratories
- Electronically entering patient notes either during or after consultations

According to doctors, availability of electronic functions for patients has increased since 2012. Services for accessing records and results online had particularly significant improvements.

Most U.S. doctors (82 percent) view patient updating of personal electronic medical records as helping patient engagement. A majority of U.S. doctors says this ability to update medical records electronically also helps patient satisfaction (81 percent), patient understanding of health conditions (72 percent), patient/physician communication (71 percent) and accuracy of records (60 percent).

In addition, U.S. doctors surveyed believe that electronic medical records have limits. Fewer U.S. doctors see positive impacts on treatment decisions, medical errors and health outcomes than in the past. Reducing medical errors is still viewed as the main benefit.



Of note, a majority of doctors from the six participating countries worry that their EHR systems are difficult to use. Specifically, they say that healthcare IT limits the amount of time they spend with patients.

Respondents included primary and secondary/specialist care doctors in those countries, who work in private or public practice settings. Primary care doctors included general and family medicine practitioners. Secondary care doctors included specialists in various fields including surgery, neurology, endocrinology, rheumatology, oncology and cardiology.

The global survey was conducted online by Nielsen between December 2014 and January 2015. The analysis provided comparisons by country, sector, age and EHR use.

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