

Electronics Health Records (EHR) Survey Results

In July, the Medical Society sent a survey to 217 Physician Offices inquiring about their activity on purchasing and using electronic health records systems. We received 87 responses and would like to share some of the information.

Current status of their practice:

38 do not plan to implement EHR for the following reasons:

9 nearing retirement

29 cost vs benefits

Initial investment and time for implementation seemed to be the number one reasons stopping the purchase and use of EHR. Followed by no national standards. The Government is working on a plan for certification of the National Standards and the companies that will be selling the products. Other factors included reliability and security.

Implementing the system requires the physician to consider the cost, selecting the appropriate system and the training. At this time there does not seem to be sufficient interest in the products on the market.

30 plan to implement in the future:

16 Offices are in the implementation process in the next year. All others are least two years in the making.

Assistance to optimize new system efficiency and effectiveness and guidance on appropriate EHT products were the top concerns. Training presents many challenges with staff and the time to do it well and again financial concerns arise in that the product you purchase today may change drastically in the future.

19 currently use a system:

17 Offices are in full use by physicians and staff. The other two are in the implementation stage.

Costs: Purchase of the above systems ran between \$10,000 and \$66,000. It was hard to compare the cost as the programs were widely different in their services, technologies and implementations. The monthly maintenance cost ran \$105 to \$5,000. The medium cost was \$1,200 a month. It was suggested to negotiate all cost prior to purchase, as well as your upgrades for the next two years.

Satisfaction of EHR Systems:

10 extremely satisfied, 6 somewhat dissatisfied, 1 look for another program.

9 find the system extremely reliable, 7 had some down time, 3 somewhat reliable.

Most like about EHR Systems:

Electronic charting, prescribing, sharing information on practice management system, cost savings and reporting abilities.

Least like about EHR Systems:

Does not interface the hospital/lab/ancillary provider systems, new kind of errors, input of data into systems, and training and lost productivity.

Has it changes practices: Reduced staff, transcription and overhead expenses. Better, faster medical records, improved patient problems, improved efficient access to records and information flow to staff.

The products used in Lee County are: Misys, Allscripts, E-MDs, Med Informatix, Alchemy, NexTech, DrNotes, Allmeds, Medical Manager Onsider Systems, e Clincial Works and LMHS provided system. It was felt by those with EHRs that it would have helped if there was cost assistance, ability to network with same specialty using system, negotiate interfaces up front and visiting other sites currently using EHR.