

EMRs: The Practical Solution

In a recent article entitled "One doctor's vision of the utopian practice," published in *Medical Economics*, author Jason Kessler, MD, discusses how Electronic Medical Records (EMR) are beneficial for everyone in the medical practice. Dr. Kessler explains how EMRs are not only cost effective, but also serve to greatly increase the efficiency and ease of office workflow. Here is a re-cap of his findings:

The Patient's Perspective:

- Patient care information and advice is accessible online via the doctor's website.
- Appointments can also be booked electronically.
- Follow-up instructions and medicinal advice is printed out and given to patient upon completion of visit.
- All prescriptions can be sent electronically to the pharmacy most convenient to the patient.
- Any follow up questions can be e-mailed to the practice and addressed in a timely manner during regular business hours.

The Doctor's Perspective:

- Fewer calls during the nights on call, because many of the patient's inquiries and concerns can be addressed online.
- The computer stations in each of the patient rooms provide immediate access to patient history.

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About Our Organization:

At Health Management Consultants (HMC) our goal is to maximize the efficiency of the business side of healthcare. As a woman-owned, small business, we are MBE/DBE certified. We serve the entire mid-Atlantic region, at the Federal, State, and local level, catering to a variety of needs, all of which help to improve the operations and performance of healthcare practices.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions regarding our company, our services, or anything in our newsletters.

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System Support Corner:



With 70-100 new virus threats discovered everyday it is extremely important for you to equip all of your servers and workstations on your network with virus protection software. Viruses can travel through networks, so if one workstation contracts a virus, it could easily and quickly spread throughout the entire office. There is only one true way to ensure your defenses against these silent

Destroyers – antivirus software. It is also important to update your software every year or you could leave your workstations susceptible to new threats. If you would like more information about updating your current software or installing antivirus protection for the first time, please call 410.715.0011 or e-mail Lindsay@hmconsult.com.

*HMC: Taking Care of the Business Side of
Health Care*

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- Doctor can record all of the patient notes and observations while conducting the visit. This helps save time and enables staff to spend more time with each patient, improving the quality of care.
- The computer also serves as a wealth of information should a question arise about a disease or medication. It allows communication with other doctors over the server and flags the patient information if they are due for any blood work or tests.
- The office is less cluttered without all of the paper around. All of the prescriptions are handled electronically, lab information and results are sent electronically, and staff is able to quickly forward this information to patients as needed.

Study Finds the Patients in Favor of EMRs

A recent study led by a research team at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center suggests that patients want full access to all their medical records, are willing to make some privacy concessions in the interest of making those medical records transparent and expect computers will play a major role in their medical care.

Tips for Successfully Selecting & Implementing an EMR

- The Doctor must take an active role in the software selection, finding one that addresses the current and future needs of the organization - All EMRs are not created equal. We recommend a written requirements analysis.
- Create a selection committee that represents all areas of the organization affected by the implementation of an EMR.
- Assess your IT infrastructure to make sure it will handle the EMR selected.
- Don't underestimate the organizational demands of EMR implementation and training.
- Assess the staff to ensure they are properly trained and prepared.
- Prepare to re-design and re-write procedures and change processes.
- The Doctor and other leaders must be cheerleaders of this change and the new culture that will arise in the organization.

Call us if we can help with your assessment and/or planning. Affordable solutions are available.



8835 Columbia 100 Pkwy
Suite A
Columbia, Maryland
21045

Phone:
410.715.0011

Fax:
410.715.6767

E-Mail:
bill@hmconsult.com

Web Address:
www.hmconsult.com

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