

1 Reluctance of US Doctors in Adopting EHR Technology

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5

6 **Abstract**

7 The purpose of this research is to identify the major barriers which are confronted by
8 physicians and doctors in the adoption of Electronic Health Records (EHRs). This study will
9 lead to various relative dimensions of Health Information Technology (HIT) with the
10 involvement of Meaningful Use, Generic Role of the Government, and Technology evaluation.
11 These selected variables will help us to develop a composite view on this study. The proposed
12 theoretical framework evaluates the degree of reluctance in physicians along with imminent
13 challenges, possibilities and plans that will streamline future incentives too.

14

15 **Index terms**— Doctors, Providers, Electronic Health Records (EHRs), Focus groups, Role of the Government,
16 Meaningful Use, Technology Evaluation, USA.

17 **1 Introduction**

18 The main purpose of this study is to identify the overall role of US government with its influence on the behavior
19 of doctors and physicians. The implementation of Electronic Health Records (EHR) has increased in light of
20 the many, since there are many pivotal consequences related to it. With such progressive changes, there have
21 been many perceived barriers and problems in the adoption of EHR. Proposed facts are generic role of the
22 US Government, meaningful use, and technology evaluation which affects the development of EHR, and makes
23 the physicians hesitant to adopt it. We cannot ignore the new adoptions in medical technology since every
24 practitioner/doctor wants accuracy in his/her work.

25 For better health outcomes and more effective chronic care management, extra effort will hold great potential
26 (Pharma Executive Summary, 2011). Electronic health record is now a fundamental component of healthcare
27 ??Hung, 2004). Healthcare systems have been improved by E-Health EHR as they provide confirmed healthcare
28 with enhanced medical practice efficiency (Li, et al., 2010). Progress and technological advancement are key
29 features to cope up with better and intended results in the field of Health. Isolated clinical information composed
30 from computer-based tools would divest clinicians of most benefits that customized technology can confer, so the
31 builders of EMR must continue to develop new ideas and the clinicians must continue to insist on products with
32 utmost functionality (Sujansky, 1998).

33 This paper will detail the standard needs and responsibilities to create a balance between new incentive
34 programs in EHR and complexities of the product. More complications in the adoption of EHR will surely
35 disturb the level of Care. Results of this study will provide defined results for future modifications to the EHR
36 system with revised standards of medicine.

37 **2 II.**

38 **3 Literature Review**

39 An extensive literature review was done to inculcate refined data for EHR and HIT adoption with summarized
40 barriers as well. Health information technology (HIT) has become fundamental to healthcare development due
41 to its potential to improve efficiency and amplify the quality of healthcare in the United States (DesRoches &
42 Stalley, 2012). If the U.S wants to attain the goal of execution of EHRs within a decade, HIT facilities will
43 need to put great exertion to speed up the process ??Houser & Johnson, 2008). The purpose of this literature

5 MEANINGFUL USE

44 review is to demonstrate the extensive adoption of electronic health records (EHR) in the medical industry, with
45 perceived barriers that bring reluctance-related issues.

46 4 Role of the Government

47 The Government role is always demanding and complex (Google search, 2012) and it should stand upon
48 exceptional principles (Benson, 1968). Role of the government in a market synchronizes all the legal
49 responsibilities to govern a strategic regime. The Government should be very concerned to accelerate EHR
50 adoption. Many government initiatives were visualized in the adoption of the universal electronic health record
51 (EHR) by all the affiliated health maintenance organizations (HMO) by the year 2014 (Goldschmidt, 2005;Appari
52 & Johnson, 2008). To accelerate EHR adoption in USA is one of the top concerns of the government (Ford, et
53 al., 2009).

54 The Government has announced financial incentives for physicians who adopt EMR/EHR systems, within the
55 specific period. Those who will meet the criteria will be paid an incentive up to \$44,000 under the Medicare plan
56 or \$64,000 under the Medicaid plan over a period of five years starting from 2011. Using an example by Mason
57 (2004), Australia Health Connect is the major national EHR initiative made up of territory, state, and federal
58 governments. Shores, et al., (2010) claimed that changes in the industry and the government policies, force
59 the providers to review their current systems and assemble the most efficient ways of accessing the government
60 incentives, offered over the coming decades.

61 Recent studies revealed that the government policies play an active role in shaping and facilitating a country's
62 health IT adoption and use (Castro, 2009). According to HFMA Survey Report (2006), the Government plays
63 an important role to play in promoting EHR adoption. Government should play a vital role to speed up the
64 development of additional standards for domains such as medications and clinical knowledge because this will
65 really accelerate the adoption of standards for clinical data with their high rates (Bates, 2005). The future of
66 EHR & EMR markets will be fundamentally dependent on authoritarian standards, the government support and
67 future trends affecting domestic healthcare systems (Accenture Survey, 2010). E-Health Systems mainly depends
68 on the success of EHR systems and the EHR system will be successful only if readiness and acceptance rate is
69 high (Li, et al., 2010).

70 In spite of the fact that many practitioners/doctors are still reluctant to adopt the technology. The Government
71 is trying to stimulate the creation of healthcare networks that use HIT (Blumenthal, et al., 2006) and has also been
72 trying to get doctors to use EHR systems for a while now, but many physicians remain doubtful (Reece, 2011).
73 The Government activities to promote EHR were extremely low, before 2004 (Ford, et al., 2009). HFMA Survey
74 Report (2006) believes that the government is an imperative character in facilitating the universal adoption
75 of EHR systems. To the reluctance among doctors, the government should make a huge investment in the
76 development of healthcare IT, particularly in EMR and EHR software (John [a], 2009), which will definitely
77 stimulate the EHR program affecting its rate of adoption as well (Shank, 2011).

78 H-1 : The lack of definitive healthcare standards from the US Government increases the reluctance of Doctors
79 in adopting EHR.

80 5 Meaningful Use

81 Meaningful use requires that a physician should use a certified EHR in a meaningful manner. To be eligible for
82 the EMR stimulus program, doctors are required to achieve the "meaningful use" standard, showing that their
83 EHR benefits accomplishes the complete quality of healthcare they offer (Stayner, 2012). For defined results in
84 EHR usability, the most appropriate task is to access the functionality of the EHR system in the framework of
85 user-meaningful operations (Zhang & Walji, 2011).

86 Surprisingly Recent studies proved that achieving meaningful use of health information technology for improved
87 quality of healthcare is critical (Kuhn, et al., 2010). The majority of EHR vendors are in the list of implementing
88 Stage 1 Meaningful Use (MU) certified products (Underwood, et al., 2011), but providers/doctors need to meet
89 all 15 of the core measures to be eligible for the incentives.

90 One of the prominent goals of The American Reinvestment & Recovery Act (ARRA or "the Stimulus Package"),
91 is to amplify the "meaningful" use of Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems among medical providers (NCIRD,
92 2012). Many physicians find it difficult to meet the different criteria of "meaningful use" including e-prescribing,
93 electronic exchange of patient health information, and reporting on clinical data. They think that purchasing
94 an EHR system will be a waste of money, as they cannot implement EHR meaningfully. While John [b] (2009)
95 & Mevis (2009) said that doctors or physicians who do not show "meaningful use" will be strictly punished in
96 the form of declining Medicare payments. They must attest to "meaningful use" of certified EHR technology to
97 be eligible for any financial incentive (Web Search [c], 2012). According to Terry (2009), physicians who are not
98 using qualified EHRs meaningfully by 2015 will lose 1 percent of their Medicare reimbursement; in 2016, they
99 will face a penalty of 2 percent and in 2017, 3 percent each year after that.

100 Apart from the financial implications of adopting EHR technology, there are numerous operational and
101 workflow improvements that they have the potential to bring. EHR systems bring the promise of increased
102 care (*Stages 2 and 3 will be defined in future by CMS rulemaking) quality, competence and security if
103 used meaningfully (Zhang & Walji, 2011). At present the EHR integration and adoption within U.S. hospital

104 communities has become a widely recognized objective with the incentive programs for meeting stage 1, stage 2
105 and stage 3 the Meaningful Use criteria ??Zywiak & Draze, 2010). Physicians who utilize EMRs and meet the
106 criteria of meaningful use can take advantage of millions of dollars in incentives (Marcus, et al., 2009). These
107 incentives motivate many doctors to go for the EHR implementation. These incentives started in 2011 and will
108 be available over the next 5 years for a physician who will show "meaningful use" of an EHR system (John [b],
109 2009). Some physicians have found meaningful-use standards easy to carry out, however some have not (Carroll,
110 et al., 2012). According to the Regional Extension Centers (RECs), physicians still encounter many problems
111 in meeting the Meaningful Use requirements (Hirsch, 2012). Many physicians/doctors are hesitant to adopt
112 new initiatives like meaningful use, which are costly to handle and may even have a negative impact on their
113 productivity (Meaningful Use Blog, 2012). Some physicians still express reluctance as they believe that their
114 workflows will be hindered and their data will be at risk (Harrell, 2012). A study by ??oney [b] (2012) concluded
115 6 Biggest Meaningful Use Challenges for Rural Hospitals, where he identified that if rural hospitals are struggling
116 to adopt EHR systems, it is possible that they are also struggling to meet meaningful use criteria. Halamka
117 (2010) wrote in one of his blogs about, "The Top 10 Barriers to EHR Implementation" where he said that the
118 stimulus money (cost) does not flow until meaningful use is accomplished. Who will pay in this time period?
119 These are some critical conditions which brings reluctance among physicians/doctors to implement EHR in their
120 organizations achieving meaningful use.

121 **6 Technology Evaluation**

122 Information technology (IT) has permeated every important aspect of daily life in the 21st century (Hung, 2004)
123 and doctors are the key factor in the creation of an online healthcare system (Woody, 1999). Aggressive use of
124 information technology (IT) in the healthcare industry is strategically fruitful (Castro, 2009). Miller and Sim
125 (2004) verified slow but steady progress in the adoption of new technology for quick technological improvements.
126 Electronic medical record (EMR) is an essential new technology in healthcare with its universal acceptance and
127 improvement in Health Industries (Samoutis, et al., 2007).

128 Adoption is recommended for better healthcare results as well as a reduction in healthcare costs. Technology
129 evaluation and its acceptance is one of the most mature research areas found in contemporary information
130 systems literature (Shank, 2011). Previous studies have found that the majority of doctors are frustrated and
131 overwhelmed by paperwork, which leaves less time to tend their patients (Woody, 1999). Many physicians or
132 doctors are not comfortable with new technology Halamka (2010).

133 Undoubtedly, lack of resources is a huge barrier in the implementation of EHR practices (Mason, 2004). A
134 major reason for incomplete EHR implementation in rural hospitals is a lack of financial and operational resources;
135 in addition there is a lack of knowledge and support for medical staff (Houser & Johnson, 2008). Poorly intended
136 word-processed EMRs will convey limited promises of digital healthcare revolution (Sujansky, 1998). A lack of
137 understanding of the design of EHR systems with the confrontation of new change invites many preliminary
138 difficulties, while implementation of this program with new features are considered to be the major technological
139 barriers to adopt EHR. Doctors who are reluctant to adopt EHRs with their patients are scared that the improved
140 connectivity will increase spending more time in answering the questions (Medefile, 2011).

141 To stimulate technological progression, the new features of EHR will surely be supportive and helpful. A
142 growing view of healthcare information and communication infrastructure is a key to fix the crisis in the U.S
143 improving the healthcare quality, control cost and access (Stead, et al., 2005; HFMA Survey Report, 2006).
144 Shores, et al., (2010) said that using potential technologies of EHR and e-prescribing, benefits like saving lives,
145 preventing patient harm by access to complete medical history and saving billions of dollars in annual healthcare
146 expenditures can be achieved whereas Carayon, et al., (2011) concluded that further implementation of EHR
147 technology will increase various issues related to hospitals by the staff caring for ill patients. According to Reece
148 (2011) EHRs won't be functional and physician-friendly until or unless physicians themselves have more input
149 into their design.

150 There are a variety of dimensions that can be easily used to minimize the level of technological obstacles to
151 HIT adoption (Blumenthal, et al., 2006). Brownlee & Pandey (2010) derived various provisions in encouraging
152 doctors, hospitals, and other medical providers to adopt the latest facility of Electronic Health Records (EHR) for
153 improved advancement of healthcare. Certain challenges covering data entry, data privacy, information secrecy
154 and security of health information in the hands of authorized users, cover the technological problems in general
155 (Mason, 2004). Barriers do include the general cost, complexity and technical issues of IT implementation
156 ??Health Report, 2004).

157 **7 III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

158 The above shown theoretical framework is a conceptual model of this current study which details the whole
159 literature in a diagrammatic form. To realize the flow of EHRs, it is vital to evaluate not simply whether a
160 practice has an EHR but all the capabilities of the EHR (Kemper et al., 2012). This paper explains the major
161 dimensions for the EHR adoption since the implementation of EHR is highly supported in many healthcare
162 systems of different countries (Gagnon, et al., 2010). A research model by Healthcare Financial Management
163 Association, Westchester III (??006) is added, manipulating this current study. Another study by Sabogal

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164 (2004) titled "EHR Adoption: A Barrier Analysis" additionally directed the same theme with many other factors.
165 Discussion & Implications

166 Previous literature and research has clearly examined the importance of EHR practice. To get valuable data,
167 it is fairly imperative to accomplish the purpose of the paper by both primary and secondary data ??Johansson,
168 2003).

169 Analysis done by Byers in 2008 concluded that there has been an overall efficiency in EHR adoption rate
170 of 45.6%, up from 40.4% from the past period. According to him, the EHR adoption rises as the number of
171 physicians practicing rises and offices with three to five practicing doctors had 54.9% adoption, while offices with
172 more than 26 practicing doctors had 77.2% adoption rate. 6,000 physicians surveyed in seven different countries
173 showed that very high percentages of physicians use EMRs, 98% physicians in the Netherlands and 89% in the
174 U.K (Smelcer, et al., 2009). However Ford, et al., (2009) concluded that less than half of the physicians working
175 in small practices will implement EHR by 2014 (47.3%), based on existing levels of adoption of EHR, comparing
176 with the adoption rates before and after 2004 ??2001-2004 and 2001-2007 respectively).

177 The foremost important step towards implementing EMR/EHR adoption is to change the psyche of a user
178 from "reluctant" to "willing" (Brownlee & Pandey, 2010). EHR adoption is relying on careful circumstances and
179 positively trying its acceptance among doctors & physicians. The Government role is additionally important for
180 engaging new tactics in medical billing. One of the pivotal implementations by the Government is to build capital
181 accessibility to facilitate and offer a virtual linkage to small providers so that they can easily access EHR systems
182 at a very reasonable price (Bates, 2005), which will surely reduce the reluctance level among doctors. Houser &
183 Johnson (2008) conducted a survey but with a limited selfreporting data. They achieved a 69% response rate
184 and of those who did not respond, the implementation of EHR in their hospitals was not detected.

185 More innovative and latest government incentives, merged with technological advances, are exclusively
186 providing more progressive reasons for physicians to implement Health IT & EHR (AMA Report). Although
187 there is a small number of hospitals that have realized the importance of these tools, more are beginning to achieve
188 their patients' greater savings and improved customer satisfaction indeed ??Hammer, 2006). EHR adoption is
189 simple, more handy, and cost effective with reference to knowledge management and new learning technologies
190 (Brownlee & Pandey, 2010) whereas Smelcer, et al., (2009) said that 30% of EMR system implementation failed
191 unluckily, because physicians cannot use the EHRs/EMRs competently. Initial adopters that begin the transition
192 to an EHR will instantly demonstrate the importance of 'meaningful use' realizing the highest possible financial
193 incentive through the stimulus, with this the providers who implement and are "meaningfully using" a certified
194 EHR system by the year 2011 and 2012 will realize the highest Medicare incentive of \$44,000 (Web Search [b],
195 2012). Kuhn, et al., (2010) emphasized that we cannot generate vigorous indicators of meaningful use of HIT
196 or cannot provide correct, relevant and trusted clinical guidance to inform healthcare delivery, until or unless we
197 have remote consistency of capturing, organizing, and reporting information from EHRs as well as exchanging
198 information between healthcare systems.

199 It's understood that if patients are provided with an easier channel of access to speak with their doctor typically
200 through email, they'll make more requests to the physician (Medefile, 2011). Technological complications can be
201 one of the important facets, but the induced results are predominant. Doctors should also support and dedicate
202 in developing the complete infrastructure to sustain their IT applications ??Health Report, 2004).

203 So the detailed variables of this study clearly demonstrate the overall importance of EHR implementation,
204 with its strong and valid consequences. Physicians or doctors in medical practices that decide not to utilize
205 an EHR system by the year 2015 may probably see Medicare/Medicaid reimbursement penalties starting from
206 1% to 5% and 2% in 2016, and 3% in 2017 (DesRoches & Stalley, 2012; Blumenthal, 2009). By the year 2020,
207 approximately 50% of healthcare practitioners/doctors will be using a functional EHR (Goldschmidt, 2005).

208 V.

209 8 Limitations

210 EHR is highly affected by the role of the government, Meaningful Use and technological evaluations. The designed
211 theoretical framework entertains the noteworthy factors affecting the reluctance of doctors in US. Biasness was
212 avoided to be on one track. Although this present study comprised very limited number of determinants that
213 might not be appropriate for other attitudes and perspectives related to EHR. Methodologically, the secondary
214 data supported the developed hypotheses. This paper may have widened up the contextual framework among
215 the doctors, physicians, patients. Doctors should confirm that they meet all the government requirements for
216 meaningful use of EHR technology which will definitely develop all the 3 "Stages" from 2011 through 2015
217 (Clinician's Guide, 2011). We should accomplish all the incentives related to EHR programs with time. The
218 Government should also apply realistic policies to make capital handy to provider group and virtual aid linkage
219 for small providers so that they can access EHR systems at a sound price (Bates, 2005). Many problems are
220 related to technology indeed, having minimum broadband communication networks, insufficiency of a standard
221 code of generally accepted practices and protocols, meager user interface design and lack of suitable vocabulary
222 and data transmission standards (Mason, 2004).

223 Quick actions must be taken to resolve all the technical issues, which will surely increase the adoption of EHR.
224 There has been noteworthy progress in EHR adoption among the doctors and hospitals in US). Medicare and
225 Medicaid increased the reimbursements policy for the doctors, making it an attractive offer. Electronic health

226 records (EHR) benefits are all apparent to its users, but considering it faultily only on the perceived consequences
is noteworthy so with the right information, doctors must start EHR implementation (Gluck, 2011). ^{1 2 3 4}



Figure 1: Global



Figure 2:

227

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Figure 3: H- 2 :



Figure 4: Figure 3 . 1 :Figure 3



Figure 5: Conclusion

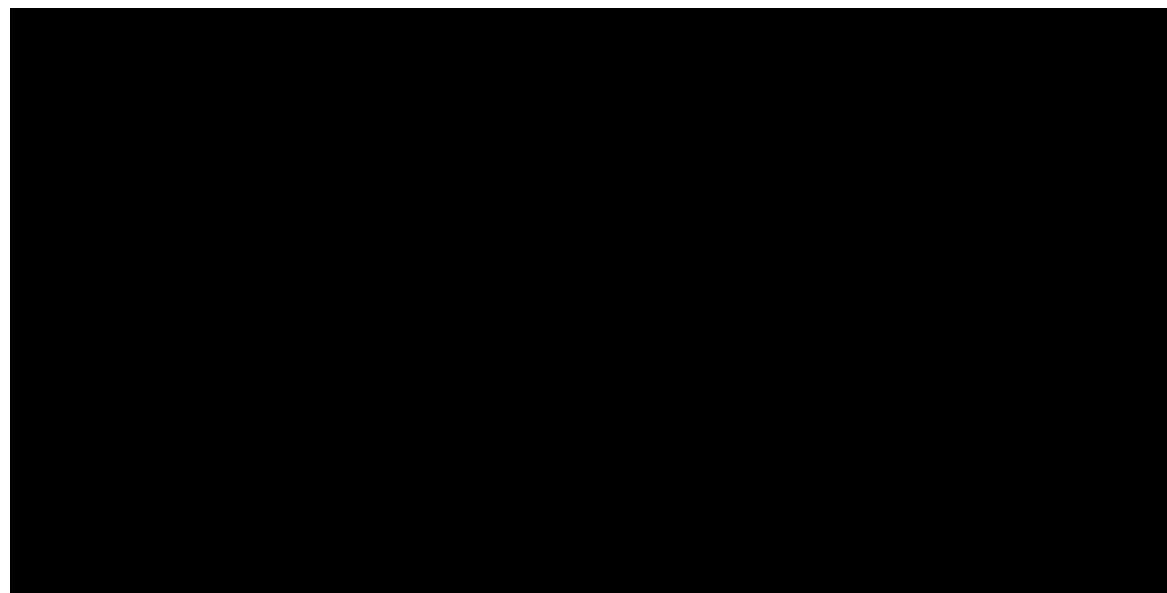


Figure 6:

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230 .2 Year

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