Healthcare Management Capstone

[Writer]

[Institution]

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Over recent years, the revolution in the healthcare system and the implementation of technological programs have been widely adopted and utilized in an efficient way. All the major corporations have shifted to fully computerized systems in all departments. Electronic Health Record (EHR) has the prospective to transform the healthcare management for the purpose of delivering higher quality patient-centered care. According to the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act of 2009, the bill was signed with an explicit purpose of providing incentives to the health providers to adopt the EHR system.

**Financial and Health Benefits of Implementing EHR**

In many countries, the healthcare industry is the source of social and economic interest; thus, implementation of EHR in the healthcare systems has undergone serious consideration. EHR in the organizations have helped reduce the billing errors and an improvement in cash flow and revenue. Improving the quality and efficiency of healthcare system is the priority of national policies. EHR implementation has been related to the quality of care and patient safety. Research in an outpatient setting has established that the computerized reminders by the use of EHR have been associated with an improved rate of influenza and pneumococcal vaccination. On a wider prospective, the use of EHR has resulted in the prevention and lower risks of disease outbreaks. Studies have also supported that the EHR implementation has reduced the medical error significantly (Menachemi & Collum, 2011).

**Estimated Cost of Implementing and Managing EHR**

Qualitative studies have suggested that the implementation and quality improvement of EHR highly depends on the use and recommendation of physicians. U.S. national policy includes the delivery of quality care and adoption of innovative techniques and methodologies in the health system. In 2009, EHR received wide acceptance and undoubted support; thus, the U.S. Congress allocated around $30 billion for the promotion and adoption of EHR in the system (Ajami & Bagheri-Tadi, 2013). It is up to physicians to evaluate the costs of bringing in and promoting new I.T. applications or vendors for the provision of services. Cost management is an important aspect as organizations have to assess the total cost of care and its viability. The total cost of care includes purchase price, coordination, monitoring, transferring, upgradation, and governance costs. Implementation of EHR in a 5-person practice is approximately $162,000 in the first year and $85,000 for maintenance annually and can reach up to a million (Palabindala, Pamarthy, & Jonnalagadda, 2016). Costing remains one of the biggest challenges for small to medium sized organizations without extended budgets allocated for the use of I.T.

**Current Security Concerns**

Despite the benefits and efficient results of using EHR in healthcare systems, there remain concerns related to the security, privacy, and integrity of the information. These concerns have led people to shy away from disclosing their healthcare data, which eventually leads to life-threatening consequences. In U.S., the Department of Health and Human Services has collected data about the implications of security concerns of using EHR and found out that around two million Americans had been struggling with mental illness as they did not seek any medical treatment due to the privacy concerns (Yüksel, Küpçü, & Özkasap, 2017). Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) has defined guidelines for protecting the patient health data and has made the consent certificate binding. Researchers, health investigators, and other organizations will require patient authorization for the disclosure of information (Cohen & Mello, 2018).

**EHR – Decision Making and Problem Solving**

The use of EHR in a health delivery process has a promising impact on facilitating shared decision making among patients, families, physicians, and health insurers. In the face of complicated situations, EHR may provide an easy way out by sharing the information between concerned individuals, and then based on the information available, making a sound decision. The shared decision making process by the use of EHR, the patient acquires preparatory education and a holistic understanding of disease diagnosis and available treatment options. The more active role of patients in decision making and solving medical implications also give importance to the patient's values and preferences. It has also proved to be a cost effective and patient-centered care strategy (Kuo, Thavalathil, Elwyn, Nemeth, & Dang, 2018).

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