

# EHR Revolt: Provider Ditches Electronic Health Records for Paper

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For the Illinois Pain Institute—which has six separate locations and 70 employees—a unanimous company-wide vote was all it took to put the clinic back on the paper trail after trying electronic health records (EHRs) and deeming them too burdensome.

In a [Becker's Health IT & CIO](#)<sup>1</sup> interview, the institute's founder, John Prunskis, MD, said that the only thing that could convince him to return to an EHR is if he were to see evidence that EHRs actually improve outcomes or [patient care](#). The data entry burden on primary care physicians was a main factor in going back to paper records. "Primary care physicians are losing hours a day; they're coming home, having dinner, playing with their kids, putting their kids to sleep, and then they spend another two to three hours at night doing data entry. It's horrible for them," he said in the interview.

Prunskis said physician practices aren't alone in their frustration with EHRs—hospital system doctors don't like them either, he said, though their "lips are sealed" since their employers favor EHRs for the incentive payments that accompany them.

Prunskis claims his clinic's patients like having their physician's undivided attention back on them during consultations, instead of having their doctor's head buried in a laptop. But he didn't note either way whether patients had the opportunity to interact with their own data and physicians through the web-based portal function that usually accompanies an EHR—a popular feature with most patients.

Prunskis is far from alone in his preference for paper recordkeeping. Recent studies have correlated physician burnout with EHRs and problems with patient safety. But for the most part, providers are choosing EHRs rather than the reverse—and not just for the financial incentives.

Research has shown many benefits come with EHRs, including the ability to use data analytics and informatics to improve care, quicker exchange of health information, and increased patient participation, according to the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC).<sup>2</sup>

ONC also [reports EHR](#) adoption among office-based physicians more than doubled between 2008 and 2015, with nearly 9 in 10 (87 percent) office-based physicians adopting an EHR.<sup>3</sup>

## Notes

1. Cohen, Jessica Kim. "[Paper records are here to stay: 4 questions with Illinois Pain Institute's Dr. John Prunskis](#)." *Becker's Health IT & CIO*. August 9, 2017.
2. Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT. "[Benefits of Electronic Health Records \(EHRs\)](#)."
3. Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT. "[Office-based Physician Electronic Health Record Adoption](#)."

### Article citation:

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