Physician Practice EHR Resources

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Editor's note: This article updates the February 2006 Journal of AHIMA *column "Resources to Assist Physician Office EHR Selection and Implementation."*

[Note: The links in this article were accurate at the time of publication.]

EHR Public and Private Initiatives

Several government-sponsored and private initiatives are under way with an explicit purpose to equip physician practices with EHRs. These groups provide a wealth of information, typically well organized and available at no charge.

American Academy of Family Physician's Center for Health Information Technology-a major collaboration of physician organizations engaged in the effort to disseminate information to promote EHR adoption

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)-brings health IT implementation to the forefront. Check your state to see how funds are being dispersed. The following Web sites provide analyses and further information about ARRA:

- The final rule for ARRA
- AHIMA ARRA resources
- The Department of Health and Human Services ARRA Implementation Plan
- The Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society's ARRA resources
- The Medical Group Management Association's ARRA resources

California HealthCare Foundation (in partnership with Community Clinics Initiative)-engaged in the California Community Clinics EHR Assessment and Readiness Project

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' e-Prescribing Incentive Initiative-created to help advance the use of technology in healthcare

Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology-established to accelerate the adoption of robust, interoperable health IT throughout the US healthcare system, by creating an efficient, credible, sustainable mechanism for the certification of health IT products

Doctor's Office Quality-Information Technology's "Selected Resource List for EHR Systems Selection"

eHealth Initiative-an independent, nonprofit organization whose mission is to drive improvement in the quality, safety, and efficiency of healthcare through information and information technology

EHR Collaborative-a group of organizations representing key stake- holders, whose goal is to advance the adoption of information standards for healthcare

Michigan Electronic Medical Record Initiative-a nonprofit corporation dedicated to the implementation of a statewide, standardized electronic medical record in Michigan

Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology-established by executive order to facilitate the effective use of information technology and collaborate with the various sectors in the health-care industry to advance widespread use of interoperable EHRs

Internet EMR/EHR Resources

There is abundant information available on the Internet, including how-to articles, buyers' guides, best practices, worksheets, and other tools. AHIMA has compiled some of the most reputable sources for you and encourage you to use these as a starting point as you assist physician practices. In many of these sites you'll find additional links to other sites with valuable information. As with any Internet search, review information objectively and always consider the source. For example, look for advertisement labels and conflict-of-interest disclosures on all Web sites and articles.

AHIMA articles and best practices available free to the public:

- "Purchasing Strategies for EHR Systems"
- "Small Practice, Big Decision: Selecting an EHR System for Small Physician Practices"
- "State of the EHR: The Vendor Perspective"

AHIMA e-HIM resources

- "Physician Practices and Information Management"

American Academy of Family Practitioners' Center for Health IT articles and resources

American Medical Association's "HIT Donations: A Guide for Physicians"

California HealthCare Foundation's "Electronic Medical Records: Lessons from Small Physician Practices"

EHR Central @ the Providers Edge-offers an array of articles and resources related to electronic health records and implementation as well as frequently asked questions books and case studies

EMR Consultant-free service to physicians and other healthcare providers educating healthcare professionals and organizations about the vast array of EHR products on the market

- "Known Pitfalls and Proven Methods in EHR Implementation"

Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society EHR resources

Medical Group Management Association resources:

- EHR resources
- "Electronic Medical Record (EMR) Checklist"

Physicians Practice "EMR Shopping? Finding Your Way in a Crowded Marketplace"

Reed Gelzer's "The EAR Party's End"

Vendor Resources and Resources to Identify and Evaluate Vendors

Many vendors have excellent materials; after all, it is to their advantage to help you recommend the EHR that will be the best fit for a physician practice. It is recommended that you visit various vendor Web sites to research and review their resources. You'll find many as you begin to investigate specific software products. AHIMA encourages you to use vendors' materials, but don't let vendors, particularly any one vendor, be your sole source of information. Seek confirmatory information and other more objective sources as well.

Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology

KLAS:

- "KLAS EMR Toolkit" helps providers make informed choices regarding stimulus-related technology decisions (free to providers only; fee for all others)

- [Specialty reports](#)-in-depth vendor performance reviews covering specific areas of interest to health-care providers

PhysiciansEHR.com [vendor directory](#)

Other Resources and Use Cases

Lastly, seek out those who have paved the way and learn from their experiences. Take advantage of listservs to network with others working with physician practices and take the time to read case studies.

Adler, Kenneth G. "[Why It's Time to Purchase an Electronic Health Record System](#)." *Family Practice Management*, November/December 2004.

DesRoches, Campbell, et al. "[Electronic Health Records in Ambulatory Care-A National Survey of Physicians](#)." *New England Journal of Medicine* 359, no. 1, (June 18, 2008): 50-60.

Melczer, Andrew H., et al. "[Background on Electronic Health Records for Small Practices](#)." White paper. Indiana State Medical Society. 2005.

Miller, Robert H., et al. "[The Value of Electronic Health Records in Solo or Small Group Practices](#)." *Health Affairs* 24, no. 5 (2005): 1127-37.

Searching for an EHR can be very time-consuming. An individual physician practice may need to spend many weeks, even months, becoming familiar with the systems that are available and analyzing the group practice's needs and goals. HIM professionals are well suited to assist physician practices in this process.

Driving the Power of Knowledge