

HEALTH CARE

NEWS AND INFORMATION

Volume 14 Number 40

November 30, 2007

Health Care: News and Information is a service of the Healthcare Leadership Council (HLC) to help our readers stay fully informed about the latest health care issues as we work to advance a high-quality health care system.

Jim Edwards, Editor

www.hlc.org

Public Sees Benefits of E-Health

A recent poll shows that the American public believes electronic health records would bring benefits.

- As the Wall Street Journal put it, "A sizeable majority of Americans believe electronic medical records have the potential to improve U.S. health care and that the benefits outweigh privacy risks. . . ."
- The survey was sponsored by the Journal and conducted by Harris Interactive.
- The fact a solid majority understands that the benefits outweigh the risks shows that the public is increasingly comfortable with life in the Information Age.

While patient privacy remains important to people, the public gets that storing patient records electronically can improve treatment, safety and cost.

- Three-fourths of Americans agreed that sharing medical records electronically among doctors and researchers could lead to better health care.
- Almost two-thirds agreed that electronic records sharing could reduce medical errors.
- Some 55 percent said e-health could help trim health care costs.
- About two-thirds think the benefits from electronic medical records are worth the risk to privacy.

E-health records are on the upswing. And those whose medical records are stored electronically tend to think it's beneficial. But there's also a "digital divide" keeping doctors and providers from getting on-line.

- About a quarter in the poll reported using some kind of electronic health record. Their doctors have most of that group's electronic records.
- Half of those Americans with an electronic record are very confident their doctors and providers have an accurate and complete record for them. Only 27 percent of those without an electronic medical history thought those records are complete.

--MORE --

- One barrier to e-health is doctors' resistance to the time and money it would take to put all their paper records into electronic form. There's also a lack of the resources it would take to outfit clinics, offices and facilities with all the computers and equipment needed.

The American public is warming up to the idea of an electronic health record and moving our health care system more fully into the 21st century Information Age. The security of electronic records is well established and we see it in our daily lives: ATMs, ordering items over the Internet, electronically sharing sensitive information with appropriate people at the office. It makes sense to take advantage of the benefits in the health care realm, as well.

The Healthcare Leadership Council, representing the innovators in each sector of the health care industry, is committed to advancing a market-based health care system that values innovation and provides affordable, high-quality care.

HLC field directors:

Steve Knuth (651) 225-8449
(IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MT, ND, SD, WI)

Darren Katz (404) 885-9351
(AL, FL, GA, SC)

Paul Pearson (405) 488-0541
(AZ, CO, KS, NE, NM, OK, TX, UT)

Brad Crone (919) 834-8994
(KY, MD, NC, TN, VA, WV)

Larry Krutchik (818) 728-3355
(AK, CA, HI, ID, NV, OR, WA, WY)

Brian Feldman (404) 885-1723
(AR, CT, LA, MA, MO, MS, NY, RI)

Tom Maher (603) 228-3342
(DE, ME, NH, NJ, OH, PA, VT)

If this fax arrives at an incorrect fax machine, if additional individuals in your company would like to receive a copy, if a recipient would like to be removed from the distribution list, or if a name or fax number needs to be changed in our system, please fax this information to Amanda Uherek at 202-296-9561 or e-mail her at auherek@hlc.org.

**Healthcare Leadership Council
1001 Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 550 South
Washington, DC 20004
(202) 452-8700
www.hlc.org**