

Tech-Savvy Doctors Improve Patient Care



Health technology, which lets physicians access real-time data critical in making care decisions, can do a lot towards improving quality of care. As such, technology can be expensive for hospitals. This question then arises: Is it worth the cost?

Generally, for health systems, getting doctors' support to cut costs is always a big challenge. "Traditionally there has been a divergence between what drives physicians and what is important to hospitals" according to Steven Liu, MD, chairman and founder of Ingenious Med, an Atlanta, Georgia-based mobile billing and care coordination solution company.

Recent developments though have led to increasing collaboration between the physician and the hospital. "Physicians are now aligned with health systems in sharing savings and helping them improve their current financial concerns," Dr. Liu noted.

Such interaction can be critical considering that what doctors write and order, which influences length of stay and tests performed, is a key driver of hospital costs. Oftentimes, however, information is not available at the point of care to help doctors make appropriate decisions.

The trend now is for hospitals to adopt solutions that get business information to the physicians while meeting the patients. There are some excellent programs for capturing such information, but what's important is to ensure that the data make it to the clinics, Dr. Liu said.

Having this kind of technical solutions should lead to an improvement in communication with patients. For example, portals allow patients, their relatives or caregivers to review the chart and ask pertinent questions to the doctors without needing to go to the hospital.

"So much of care is being done outside of traditional hospital settings" explained Steve Massini, vice president of financial reporting for Geisinger Clinic in Danville, Pennsylvania. The ability of patient to review and understand their records "translates to the right care at the right time in the right setting," Massini said. As a result, costly waste through readmissions or procedures that are not needed is avoided.

On the other hand, with real-time technology, a clinician interacting with the patient can retrieve needed information and act on it quickly. Hence, the management of the patient gets more efficient not only in terms of cost but in quality of care, Massini added.

[Source: Healthcare Finance News](#)

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