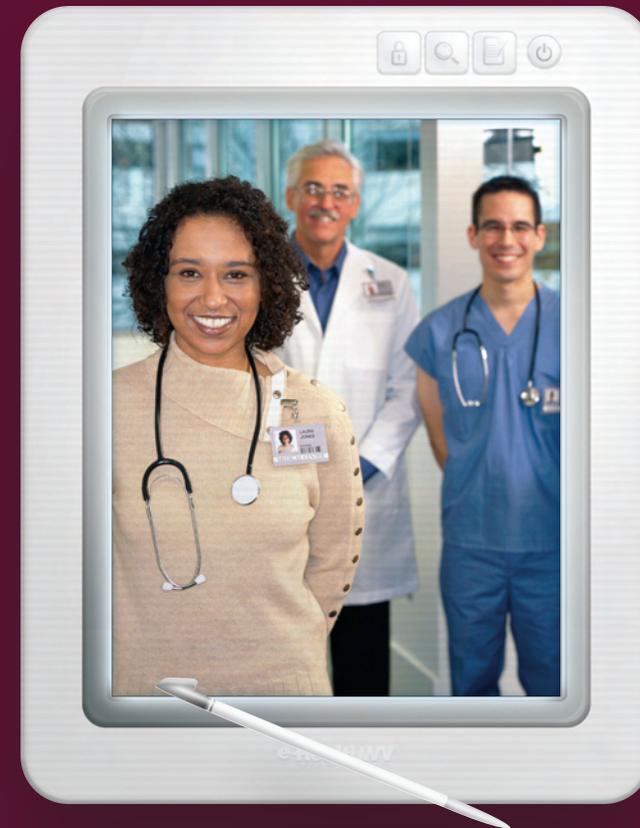


Health Information Technology: Physicians and Other Providers



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Electronic Health Records

Electronic health records (EHRs) are computerized versions of patients' clinical, demographic and administrative data. They include treatment histories, medical test reports and images stored in an electronic format that can be accessed by designated health care professionals on a computer network. In West Virginia, some physicians have implemented electronic health record systems.

Physicians are concerned about the benefits versus costs of EHR systems. The process of converting older records can be overwhelming. The main question for physicians is, "Will my patients accept the change?" In a 2007 telephone survey, this question was asked of 500 West Virginians. The survey indicated that more than two-thirds of West Virginians are supportive of EHRs.*

* Global Strategy Group survey, August-September 2007

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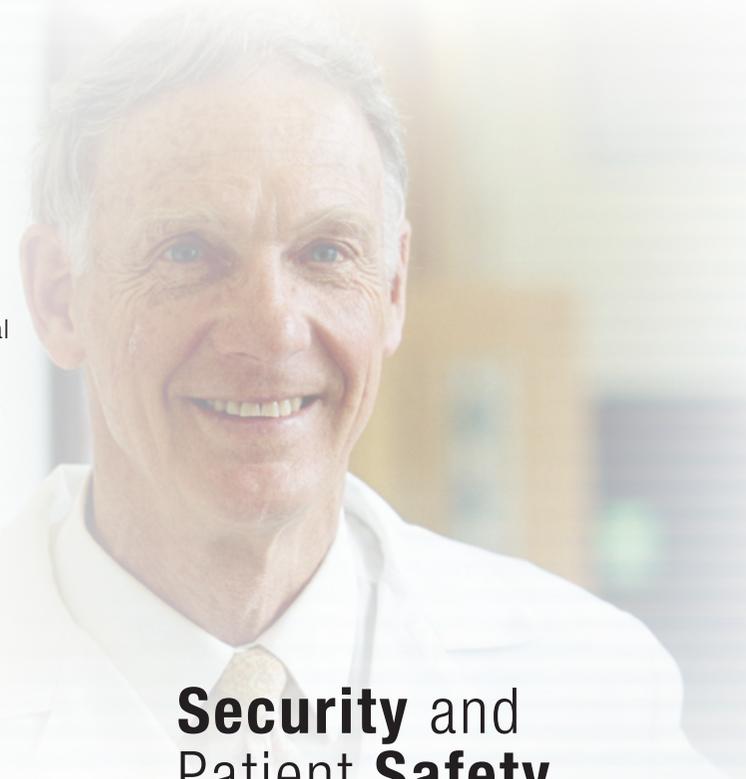
Patients trust their doctors when it comes to medical care. If you decide to convert to an electronic record system, your patients will trust your judgment. To make your conversion even easier, eHealthWV has developed patient brochures, posters, and an informational Web site, www.eHealthWV.org, that you can use to educate your patients on the benefits of EHRs.

Physician Practices **Benefit**

Electronic health records provide many benefits for patients, physicians and other providers. Patient management and tracking are made easier. Many West Virginia communities are prone to flooding. With EHRs, your patient and business records can be backed up and securely stored off site. If a disaster hits, your medical practice can be re-established quickly.

Use of electronic health records can reduce malpractice insurance costs. Some insurance companies give discounts to physicians and other providers with EHR systems.

It takes valuable space to store paper health records. By digitizing records, more space will be available for clinical needs rather than using that space for paper health record storage. In addition, once the record conversion is completed, your office efficiency will increase.



Security and Patient Safety

Just like paper records, EHRs must comply with the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) as well as other state and federal laws on privacy. Patient privacy and security are built into all systems. Unlike paper records, electronic health records can be encoded so that only authorized individuals can view them.

System developers and governmental agencies are working to protect patient security. EHR systems use state-of-the-art computer programs to block hackers and those who might want access to private information without permission. Patients can rest assured their records are secure.

For more information, visit our Web site: www.eHealthWV.org