The Implementation and Future Directions of e-Health Information Policy: Greece

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ABSTRACT

Information technology has the potential to transform working procedure in the health care sector. Clinicians have used Health Information Management and Technology (HIM&T) for more than two decades to assist in achieving better healthcare delivery outcomes. Medical knowledge is too complex for humans to master in a single mind, and to remember everything about each patient. Medical data consist of many kinds of data from different sources, requiring the development of many medical decision support systems. Creating and indexing records for hospitals and health systems present difficult challenges, because the medical records contain sensitive information. Increased computerization and other policy factors have contributed to privacy risks. Transforming from paper-based to Electronic Medical Records (EMR) allows healthcare providers to share information across their care ecosystem. Access to this digital lifeline, connecting the EMR to the digital web platform, is critical to saving lives, preventing medical errors and improving efficiency of healthcare delivery. Choosing the international classification systems for patients, ICD, DRGs, grouped patients according to the resources consumption required for treatment and other clinical characteristics. Information Technology provides solutions to this problem. A vital element of healthcare delivery is to ensure that the patient is always at the centre of everything clinicians do.

Keywords: Diagnosis Related Groups (DRGs), Electronic Medical Records (EMR), Greek Healthcare System (NHS), Health Information Management, International Classification of Disease Codes (ICD), Medical Informatics, Medical Ontologies

INTRODUCTION

The Greek Healthcare system (NHS) was established in 1983, with the responsibilities for the provision of hospital, emergency pre-

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1992 OECD taxonomy—where the financing is provided by a combination of social insurance and general taxation. Services are offered by both public and private providers. Since 2001, Regional Health Authorities have been established, currently named DYPE (Administration of Health Services Region) with the extensive responsibilities of setting national priorities and coordinating activities at the regional level.

E-HEALTH STRATEGY IN GREECE

Public health policies in Greece appear to have contributed to raising pull information, on National Health Level network. These include the development of basic infrastructures, electronic services and standards, as well as of project administration and management. One core objective is the National Health Information System infrastructure, supported by IASYS and interacts with its environment through the citizens’ health card and the professional card. This global strategy was made public in June 2006, titled “Quality and Safety of Health Care Services in an e-Government Environment,” specifically emphasizes e-Health Strategic patient document portal.

The Hellenic Health Care System has planned to provide universal coverage to the population based on the principles of equity, equal access to health services for all and social cohesion. The Health Information Systems have much to offer in managing health care costs and in improving the quality of care. Organizations need to know as much as possible about patients at the point of care, to avoid many problems currently plaguing Information Resources Management.

E-HEALTH APPLICATIONS IN GREECE

Report by the Association of public Health Observatories (APHO 2002-2012) suggested implementation of the following standardisation activity. A Health portal with appropriate interface to the national Health Information System was established in 2011 (ESY.net) with associated projects including:

- Information system for the National Ambulance service,
- National Blood bank information system,
- Primary Care Information system,
- Information system covering transactions between hospitals and insurance organizations on patient charges,
- Smart card-based health insurance project, and
- Medical Libraries Information system.

A number of additional focused projects in Greek Hospitals were planned to support patient safety:

- Support of NHS decentralization with Advanced Clinical Decision Support Information Systems,
- Development of data base concerning public health,
- Point of care applications with CDS,
- Integrated information from clinical trial applications into clinical information systems,
- Creation of Health portals setting a secure network to transfer information between health local bodies,
- Primary healthcare support e-services including GP, e-health records, e-patient records, e-referrals, and
- Creation a consortium of Greek Medical Libraries, making use of the Internet for access to BioMedicine information and Knowledge.

Although efforts for the introduction of ICT in public health care settings began in the mid-80s, the results so far have not met the desired benefits. Recent results by the National Statistical Service of Greece and by the Ministry of Health and Welfare (ESY.net) found that in an average Greek hospital, up to two million
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www.igi-global.com/article/gyn-emr-software-solution-obstetricians/74722?camid=4v1a