Chapter 5

Physician Interaction with EHR: The Importance of Stakeholder Identification and Change Management

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research Medical Center is a regional medical center that meets the needs of residents of a rural area in the Midwest. It is part of a large healthcare system. The primary care hospital implemented the Electronic Health Record (EHR). The endeavor to implement Health IT applications including Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE), EHRs, nursing documentation, and paperless charts, adverse drug reaction alerts, and more were introduced with the corporate initiative. The core applications were clinical and revenue cycle systems, including CPOE. The planning, implementation, and training was developed by the parent operating company and efforts to engage the local physicians were minimal. There were over 300 physicians involved. The physicians were primarily not hospital employees. They had the ability to choose to adopt the EHR and adapt their social, work, and technology practices, or to avoid usage. Follow up research indicated the change management and support efforts were not successful for the physician stakeholder.

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ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Living the traditions, visions and values of healthcare, Research Medical Center is a regional medical center that meets the needs of residents in a rural area of the Midwest. Research Medical Center partners with other community healthcare providers to sponsor a regional cancer center, paramedic services, hospice services, a freestanding surgery center and a variety of other health services.

Research Medical Center has earned more national recognition for quality patient outcomes than any other hospital in the region. The medical center has earned multiple honors for its leadership and excellence in several clinical areas including cardiac care, orthopedic services, vascular surgery, stroke care, and cancer care. The organization is home to the only Level II Trauma Center in the area, and provides a vital, lifesaving link to rural areas via Air Care, the hospital’s helicopter ambulance service.

Research Medical Center is a member of a large healthcare system. The parent company’s vision is to be a leader in improving health care delivery with technology initiatives. They became an industry leader, embracing leading leading-edge technology and implemented an Electronic Health Record (EHR). The record is supported by Cerner, and the hospital went live with several Cerner modules to support patient care, including FirstNet, INet, physician computerized order entry. The EHR goal was to reduce errors, streamline documentation, improve clinical quality, and create a more efficient process. The planning and implementation was created from with a centralized, corporate perspective. To provide consistency and achieve the goals of integrated systems, the implementations for all parent company hospitals were achieved with the same goals, objectives, and project plan.

SETTING THE STAGE

Research has shown that the healthcare industry is plagued by rapidly increasing costs, poor quality of service, lack of integration of patient care, and lack of information access to EHR. According to the Institute of Medicine (IOM, 2001), medical errors are a major problem that decreases the quality and increases the costs of the U.S. healthcare system. Medical errors result in 98,000 deaths a year and many more injuries, and as a result, patient safety has become a top priority in U.S. healthcare.

The use of Information Technology (IT) has the potential to help healthcare organizations improve quality of service while reducing costs. The Institute of Medicine (IOM, 2001) reported that the U.S. healthcare system is “fundamentally broken” and called on the federal government to make a major investment in information