



BACKGROUNDER

Emerging Benefits of EMR Use in Ambulatory Care in Canada

About the Study

Canada Health Infoway commissioned PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to author the latest pan-Canadian study – [The Emerging Benefits of EMR Use in Ambulatory Care in Canada: Benefits Evaluation Study](#).

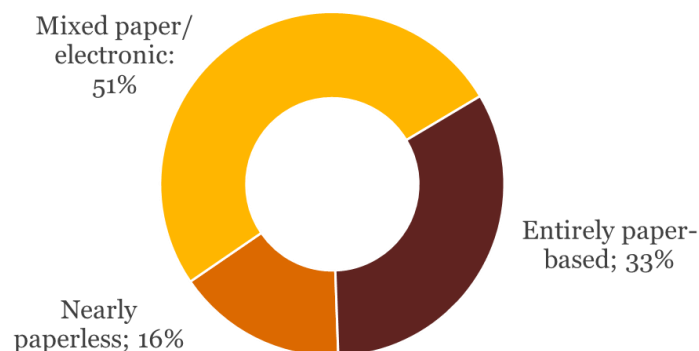
The study examined the current and emerging value of electronic medical record (EMR) use in hospital-based outpatient ambulatory care in Canada. The study demonstrates compelling support for continued EMR adoption and advancing maturity of use among clinicians and staff in ambulatory care.

In developing the study, PwC drew on multiple data sources including:

- More than 200 research publications
- The [2015 National Ambulatory Care EMR Adoption and Maturity of Use Landscape Survey](#) (2015 AMB EMR Landscape Survey)
 - Only national measure of EMR use in ambulatory care in Canada
 - Used to determine EMR adoption and maturity of EMR use for the study
 - 285 hospital-based outpatient ambulatory clinic surveys were completed by clinic staff from October 2015 to January 2016
- Evaluation reports from Infoway AMB EMR & HIS Connect investment projects from across Canada (14 total)
- Key informant interviews

Key Findings/Study Context (source: 2015 AMB EMR Landscape Survey)

The majority (51 per cent) of ambulatory clinics in Canada report having some electronic access to patient information, but maintain paper charts as the main record keeping system for patient visits; 33 per cent report that patient information is entirely paper-based.

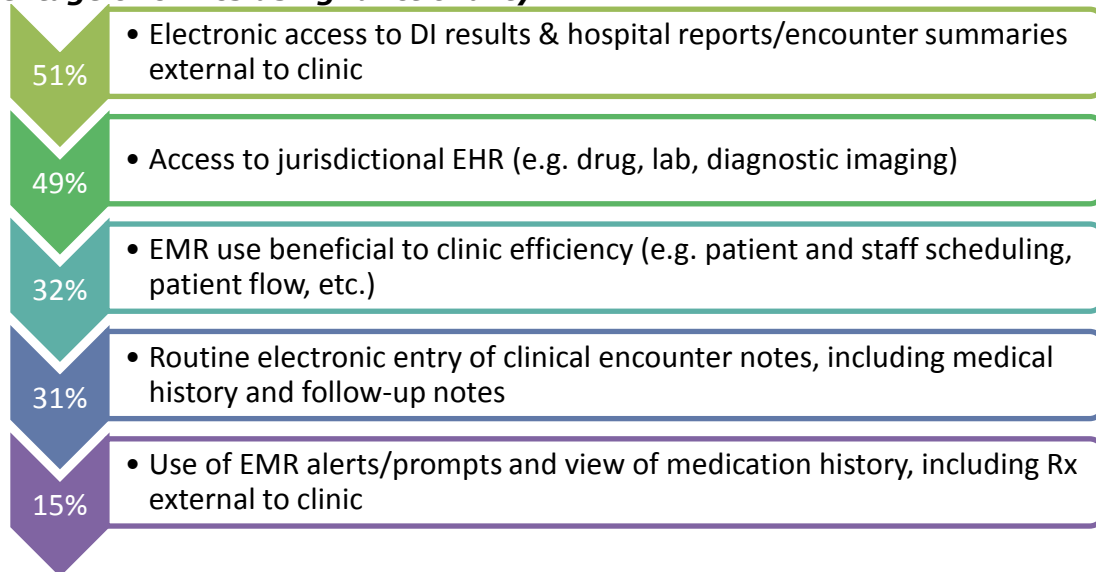


Q: How does your clinic document information on its own patients, such as detailed demographics, medical and drug history, and diagnostic information such as laboratory results and findings from diagnostic imaging?

Base: All respondents to 2015 AMB EMR Landscape Survey (n=285)

Among ambulatory clinics with electronic patient information, there is variation in the use of specific functionalities to support patient care that associate with specific benefit estimates reported in the study.

Percentage of clinics using functionality



Summative Benefits (source: 2015 AMB EMR Landscape Survey and Emerging Benefits of EMR Use in Ambulatory Care in Canada: Benefits Evaluation Study)

- 57 per cent of EMR-enabled clinics reported that EMR use had been beneficial for improving quality of care
 - Clinics with access to external data sources, those using more advanced functions and those that transitioned to a fully paperless environment were more likely to report EMR use had a positive impact on improving quality of care (66 per cent, 74 per cent and 87 per cent respectively)
- Estimated \$200 million in annual value realized in 2015
 - \$95 million from reduced clinician time spent on chart management processes
 - \$46 million from avoided duplicate laboratory tests and \$37 million from avoided duplicate diagnostic tests
 - \$13 million from reduced hospitalizations due to adverse drug events
 - \$4 million worth of patient time saved when availability of required health information avoided unnecessary delays in care
- Approximately 1.2 million additional patient visits in 2015 resulting from enhanced clinic efficiency
- The report includes a special focus highlighting the specific values in outpatient cancer care:
 - 201,000 – the estimated number of fewer days patients spent waiting from consultation to first treatment
 - 15,500 – estimated additional radiation therapy treatments
 - 4,000 – estimated additional systemic therapy treatments

Critical Success Factors (source: Harris-Decima, 2015 AMB EMR Landscape Survey)

Early findings are encouraging; however, there is still a wide range of benefits still to be realized. The key barriers to realizing the full value of EMRs in ambulatory care are:

- Clinics managing multiple electronic systems (64 per cent of EMR-enabled ambulatory clinics access two or more electronic systems)
- Multiple logins to support patient care from registration to discharge (average 3 logins)
- Most manage the complexity of multiple electronic systems amidst paper-based systems/processes (51 per cent)

EMR Adoption in Canada

Since 2001, Infoway and its partners have invested in both electronic health records (EHRs) and EMRs in primary and specialist care. In partnership with hospital organizations and the provinces and territories, Infoway's investment have included investment in 22 ambulatory care EMR implementation projects impacting approximately 25,000 clinicians in nine provinces.

About EMRs

An [electronic medical record](#) (EMR) is a computer-based patient record, which details patient demographics, medical and drug history, and diagnostic information. They are often integrated with other software that manages activities such as billing and scheduling.

About EHRs

An [electronic health record](#) (EHR) is a secure, integrated collection of a person's encounters with the health care system. It provides a comprehensive digital view of a patient's health history including lab results, medication profiles, key clinical reports (e.g. hospital discharge summaries), diagnostic images (e.g. x-rays), and immunization history.

- 30 -

For more information:**Dan Strasbourg**

Director, Media Relations

Canada Health Infoway

(416) 595-3424

dstrasbourg@infoway-inforoute.ca