Workshop on Electronic Healthcare Information Exchange: Teaching and Research Implications

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DESCRIPTION

The nature of healthcare is evolving due to the push to adopt electronic health records. Because the technology is new, there is a critical need to understand the issues surrounding the adoption and use of electronic health records. The goal of electronic health records is to allow the sharing of health information between providers at the point-of-care. This sharing of information between the electronic health record systems at various healthcare providers is called health information exchange (HIE). The U.S. federal government aims to have providers exchanging health information at the state level as well as at the national level. Therefore, there are many stakeholders who need to coordinate efforts to exchange health information.   These stakeholders include patients/consumers, providers, insurance companies, pharmacies, marketing organizations, patient advocacy groups, policy-makers and legislators, educational institutions, and research organizations. Because there are many stakeholders involved, the implementation of healthcare information exchange technology is very complicated.

$2 billion of federal funds has been dedicated to the adoption of healthcare information exchange technology, with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) recently allotting $162 million for State Health Information Exchange Cooperative Agreement Programs (Manos, May 2010). The DHHS awarded $267 of this funding to establish Health Information Technology Regional Extension Centers which will support tens of thousands of related jobs such as IT technicians, trainers, nurses, and pharmacy technicians (Manos, April 2010). While the overall Information Technology sector lost approximately 175,000 jobs last year, the healthcare IT sector is anticipated to grow (McGee, 2010). Due to the complex and interdisciplinary nature of healthcare information exchange and the prospects for new jobs, there are rich opportunities to incorporate healthcare information exchange concepts into class curricula and academic research studies.

The purpose of this workshop is to discuss how healthcare information exchange in the U.S. affects our classroom and research agendas. The following are topics to be covered:

1. *The background of healthcare information exchange based on the workshop leader's work with a variety of state and national organizations involved in healthcare information exchange efforts over the last four years.*

2. *Ways to incorporate examples of healthcare information exchange into different classes (such as Programming, Database, Networks and Communications, Business Communications, Management of Information Systems) will be discussed. This will emphasize the need to educate the future healthcare IT workforce.*

3. *Potential areas for future research will be discussed. Healthcare information exchange touches many different areas such as information technology, management, innovation and diffusion, technology adoption, political science, business processes, finance and economics, security, and privacy.*

BENEFIT OF SESSION TO PARTICIPANTS

The attendees will learn ways to incorporate concepts of healthcare information exchange into their classes and that the educating our future health information exchange workforce is critical. Attendees will also discover ways to integrate health information exchange into research areas of interest.

REFERENCES

Manos, Diana. (April 6, 2010) HHS Grants $267 million for More Regional Extension Centers, Thousands of Jobs. Accessed May 2010 at http://www.healthcareitnews.com/news/hhs-grants-267-million-more-regional-extension-centers-thousands-jobs

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McGee, Marianne.   (January 19, 2010) Information Week (Senior Editor Blog). http://www.informationweek.com/blog/main/archives/2010/01/health_it_a_bri.html