

NEWS RELEASE



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Survey: *Oregon continues to be ahead of national electronic health record adoption rates*

Headline: *health record adoption rates*

A recently released survey finds that Oregon continues to see higher adoption of electronic health records (EHRs) among clinicians than nationally.

The Oregon Electronic Health Records (EHR) survey asked ambulatory practices and clinics about their use of EHRs and electronic practice management (EPM) systems used by their clinicians (physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners).

The survey found that 65 percent of clinicians in Oregon are in practices with an EHR system, compared with national data for 2009 indicating that 44 percent of office-based physicians were using any EHR system. Similar comparisons have shown Oregon to be ahead of national trends since 2006, when 53 percent of Oregon's clinicians reported having EHR systems.

The 2009 Oregon survey also looked at different levels of EHR systems within practices and clinics. When comparing "basic" or "fully functional" EHR systems the difference between Oregon and national adoption rates was even greater:

- 48 percent of Oregon clinicians are in an ambulatory practice with a basic EHR system, compared with 20.5 percent of physicians in office-based practices nationally; and
- 32 percent of Oregon clinicians are in a practice with a fully functional EHR system, compared to only 6 percent nationally.

"Oregon's high level of EHR adoption, especially when we look at the higher functional level of EHR systems, provides a strong foundation as we plan for statewide health information exchange to help clinicians meet meaningful use criteria," said Steve Gordon, M.D., chair of the Oregon Health Information Technology Oversight Council, and vice president and chief quality officer for PeaceHealth Oregon region.

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A basic EHR system is defined as including all of the following functional components: patient demographics, patient problem lists, electronic medication lists, clinical notes, order entry management of prescriptions, and viewing capability of laboratory and imaging results (reports).

A fully functional EHR system is defined as including the basic system functionalities as clinical notes of the medical history and follow-up, ordering of laboratory and radiology tests, electronic transmission of prescriptions and orders, and electronic return of images. Fully functional also includes clinical decision support with warnings of drug interactions or contraindications, highlighting of out-of-range test levels and reminders regarding guideline based interventions or screening.

For those providers who have EHR systems, the survey asked about the strengths and benefits of their systems. For those who haven't yet adopted, the biggest reported challenges for those who are planning to adopt an EHR were expense of implementation, loss of productivity, ongoing costs and expense of purchase. For those practices or clinics that reported that they are not planning to implement an EHR the major barriers were concerns about the expenses of purchase and implementation.

The Oregon Electronic Health Records (EHR) Survey was produced by the Office of Oregon Health Policy and Research in partnership with David M. Witter, Jr. of Witter & Associates. The 2009 survey was mailed in February 2009 to 2,273 Oregon ambulatory clinics and physician practices, and was completed by 57 percent of practices and clinics. The final survey was released March 5, 2010. The full report can be accessed at <http://www.oregon.gov/OHPPR/HITOC/docs/OR2009EHRSurvey.pdf>.

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