Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) is a cause-based non-profit organization representing 64,000 individual members, 640 corporate members, and over 450 non-profit organizations to transform healthcare through the best use of information technology (IT).

Health IT encompasses an array of technologies such as electronic health records (EHR), e-prescriptions, and telehealth to store, share, and analyze health information. It allows for greater patient engagement, improved efficiencies, secure exchanges of health information, and increased care access. Health IT is critical in supporting the movement towards value-based care, emphasizing high quality and low cost.

Health IT in Nebraska

Southeast Nebraska Behavioral Health Information Network (SNBHIN) - Lincoln, NE
SNBHIN enables behavioral healthcare providers to share patient information electronically. This Network implemented the Electronic Behavioral Health Information Network (eBHIN), a regional Health Information Exchange (HIE) in southwest Nebraska, to improve the efficiency of searching patient records. Almost 80% of consumers have "opted-in" to share their health information. Interviews and surveys were conducted with providers to study technology acceptance and adoption.
Results:
- Almost 70% of providers had positive beliefs about HIE, including that it would improve care and communication and positively impact workflow
- HIE between rural and urban providers improves ambulatory patient care coordination and safety across treatment setting [1]

Fremont Family Care - Fremont, NE
Fremont is a small primary care practice and is part of the larger Fremont Health Medical Center. Fremont's EHR implementation led to improved documentation, cost avoidance associated with improved clinical outcomes, remote patient monitoring, clinical decision support, and a higher level of patient engagement and decision making.
Results:
- Over 50% decrease in the number of patients hospitalized for pneumonia
- Improved HgbA1c control in Fremont's patient population
- Increased screening and immunizations for flu, breast cancer, and colorectal cancer [2]

Chadron Community Hospital and Health Services - Chadron, NE
Chadron is a rural 25-bed Critical Access Hospital which provides medical and surgical care, obstetrics and newborn care, emergency care, and rehabilitation services. In 2011, Chadron's EHR implementation led to accessible and organized patient records.
Results:
- Clinicians are able to query state records to find patient immunization information
- Hospital staff are able to locate vital historical information that provide context to patients' conditions and treatment methods

● Rates of documentation with patient visits and tests increased [3]

Nebraska Medicine (NM) - Omaha, NE
NM includes two acute care hospitals, one of which is the largest and highest-rated hospital in the state. All beds are tele-capable. To decrease rates of telemetry, NM implemented a decision support tool within their EHR to require review of each telemetry order and provide an efficient method of discontinuing unnecessary telemetry.

Results:
● Decrease in percentage of patient days with telemetry, as orders are discontinued earlier in the patient's stay
● Increased patient satisfaction upon discontinuation of telemetry and decreased alarm fatigue due to telemetry alarms
● Estimated annual savings of $560,000 [4]

Future Implications

Health IT has yielded tangible benefits in Nebraska; however, there is still great potential for expanded use of EHRs, telehealth, and other e-health tools in the state and nationwide. Collaboration among government, care providers, health IT experts, and patients will help transform the healthcare system. It will be crucial to continue fostering health IT to achieve interoperability across the health sector and to progress towards patient-centered care.

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