Data Integrity: Challenges in Health Information Systems in South Africa

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Abstract : Poor system use, including inappropriate design of health information systems, causes difficulties in communication with patients and increased time spent by healthcare professionals in recording the necessary health information for medical records. System features like pop-up reminders, complex menus, and poor user interfaces can make medical records far more time consuming than paper cards as well as affect decision-making processes. Although errors associated with health information and their real and likely effect on the quality of care and patient safety have been documented for many years, more research is needed to measure the occurrence of these errors and determine the causes to implement solutions. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to identify data integrity challenges in hospital information systems through a scoping review and based on the results provide recommendations on how to manage these. Only 34 papers were found to be most suitable out of 297 publications initially identified in the field. The results indicated that human and computerized systems are the most common challenges associated with data integrity and factors such as policy, environment, health workforce, and lack of awareness attribute to these challenges but if measures are taken the data integrity challenges can be managed.

Keywords : data integrity, data integrity challenges, hospital information systems, South Africa
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