# Clinicians' Experiences with IT Systems in a UK District General Hospital: A Qualitative Analysis

**Authors :** Sunny Deo, Eve Barnes, Peter Arnold-Smith

**Abstract :** Introduction: Healthcare technology is a rapidly expanding field in healthcare, with enthusiasts suggesting a revolution in the quality and efficiency of healthcare delivery based on the utilisation of better e-healthcare, including the move to paperless healthcare. The role and use of computers and programmes for healthcare have been increasing over the past 50 years. Despite this, there is no standardised method of assessing the quality of hardware and software utilised by frontline healthcare workers. Methods and subjects: Based on standard Patient Related Outcome Measures, a questionnaire was devised with the aim of providing quantitative and qualitative data on clinicians' perspectives of their hospital's Information Technology (IT). The survey was distributed via the Institution's Intranet to all contracted doctors, and the survey's qualitative results were analysed. Qualitative opinions were grouped as positive, neutral, or negative and further sub-grouped into speed/usability, software/hardware, integration, IT staffing, clinical risk, and wellbeing. Analysis was undertaken on the basis of doctor seniority and by specialty. Results: There were 196 responses, with 51% from senior doctors (consultant grades) and the rest from junior grades, with the largest group of respondents 52% coming from medicine specialties. Differences in the proportion of principle and sub-groups were noted by seniority and specialty. Negative themes were by far the commonest stated opinion type, occurring in almost 2/3's of responses (63%), while positive comments occurred less than 1 in 10 (8%). Conclusions: This survey confirms strongly negative attitudes to the current state of electronic documentation and IT in a large single-centre cohort of hospital-based frontline physicians after two decades of so-called progress to a paperless healthcare system. Greater use would provide further insights and potentially optimise the focus of development and delivery to improve the quality and effectiveness of IT for clinicians and their patients.