Planning the Journey of Unifying Medical Record Numbers in Five Facilities and the Expected Challenges: Case Study in Saudi Arabia

Authors : N. Al Khashan, H. Al Shammari, W. Al Bahli

Abstract : Patients who are eligible to receive treatment at the National Guard Health Affairs (NGHA), Saudi Arabia will typically have four medical record numbers (MRN), one in each of the geographical areas. More hospitals and primary healthcare facilities in other geographical areas will launch soon which means more MRNs. When patients own four MRNs, this will cause major drawbacks in patients' quality of care such as creating new medical files in different regions for relocated patients and using referral system among regions. Consequently, the access to a patient's medical record from other regions and the interoperability of health information between the four hospitals' information system would be challenging. Thus, there is a need to unify medical records among these five facilities. As part of the effort to increase the quality of care, a new Hospital Information Systems (HIS) was implemented in all NGHA facilities by the end of 2016. NGHA's plan is put to be aligned with the Saudi Arabian national transformation program 2020; whereby 70% citizens and residents of Saudi Arabia would have a unified medical record number that enables transactions between multiple Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) vendors. The aim of the study is to explore the plan, the challenges and barriers of unifying the 4 MRNs into one Enterprise Patient Identifier (EPI) in NGHA hospitals by December 2018. A descriptive study methodology was used. A journey map and a project plan are created to be followed by the project team to ensure a smooth implementation of the EPI. It includes the following: 1) Approved project charter, 2) Project management plan, 3) Change management plan, 4) Project milestone dates. Currently, the HIS is using the regional MRN. Therefore, the HIS and all integrated health care systems in all regions will need modification to move from MRN to EPI without interfering with patient care. For now, the NGHA have successfully implemented an EPI connected with the 4 MRNs that work in the back end in the systems' database.

Keywords : consumer health, health informatics, hospital information system, universal medical record number

Conference Title : ICHIHIT 2018 : International Conference on Health Informatics and Health Information Technology

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : April 24-25, 2018