



Accurate, Easy to Use, Useful? Hospice and Home Health Nurses' Perceptions of the EHR

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Problem Statement: Electronic health records (EHR) are now commonplace in the home health and hospice setting, however, studies of nurses' perceptions of variables related to technology and their perception of the impact of technology on quality care are severely lacking in the literature. System designers, administrators and nurses themselves need to know what causes nurses to use an information system and how the nurse might perceive the quality benefits of using a system. Technology acceptance has been studied in the information systems domain by application of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which hypothesizes that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of information technology (IT) are major determinants of IT usage. **Methods:** This pilot study attempted to describe home health and hospice nurses' perceptions of ease of use, usefulness, and documentation accuracy in a population of home health and hospice nurses in on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Delaware. Nurses employed by home health and hospice agencies were asked to complete a survey measuring perceptions of ease of use, usefulness, and accuracy. **Results:** Surveys were completed and returned by 50 (33% response rate) full time registered nurses who were mostly female (female=47, male=2, 1 unknown). The mean age was 47 years (SD 11.58, range of 26-73). Approximately half of the group had associate degrees in nursing (n=26), while the remainder had a mixture of Bachelor's degrees (n=14) and diplomas (n=6). Nurses' utilization of an EHR ranged from less than 1 to 17 years (mean=5.83, SD=4.19). Preliminary analysis of the survey has identified that nurses did not perceive the EHR to be highly accurate, easy to use, or useful. All items on these scales were rated on a 5 point Likert scale (strongly agree=5, strongly disagree =1). The accuracy scale had 8 items with a Cronbach's Alpha of .743. The overall mean for this scale was 3.255 (SD=.618). The perceptions of usefulness scale had four items and a Cronbach's alpha of .879. The overall mean of the usefulness scale was 3.12 (SD=.85153). Perceptions of ease of use by nurses was rated lowest of the three scales. The Cronbach's Alpha for this four item scale was .854. The overall mean of this scale was 2.847 (SD=.86875). **Significance:** This is the first documented use of these scales with a population of home health and hospice nurses. System designers need to be keenly aware of nurses' need for useful, easy to use and accurate systems. Further research is needed to more thoroughly explore the impact of technology on quality of care in the home health and hospice setting.