Is electronic health record use associated with patient satisfaction in hospitals?

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Authors Kazley, ASwanson, Diana, ML, Ford, EW, Menachemi, N
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Abstract

PURPOSE: The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between hospital electronic health record (EHR) use and patient satisfaction.

DATA SOURCES/STUDY SETTING: We used EHR and other data from the American Hospital Association and Area Resource File as well as all 10 measures of patient satisfaction from the Hospital Compare data from 2008.

METHODOLOGY/APPROACH: We used a retrospective cross-sectional approach and control for potential selection bias with propensity score matching. Ten regression models were used to measure the relationship between EHR use and patient satisfaction. Of these, 3 of the 10 patient satisfaction items were hypothesized to be amenable by EHR automation; the remaining 7 measures served as counterfactuals.

FINDINGS: Electronic health record use was positively and significantly associated with the 3 hypothesized measures and none of the counterfactual measures of patient satisfaction. The three measures associated with EHR use included (a) whether the staff gave the patient information on what to do for recovery at home, (b) whether the patient would rate the hospital as a 9 or a 10, and (c) whether the patient would recommend the hospital. The significant relationships persisted with propensity score adjustments.

PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS: Electronic health record use is positively associated with 3 of 10
measures of patient satisfaction. Policy and decision makers interested in EHR adoption should also consider the potential impact that such adoption can have on patient satisfaction.

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