The role of information technology usage in physician practice satisfaction.

BACKGROUND: Despite the growing use of information technology (IT) in medical practices, little is known about the relationship between IT and physician satisfaction.

PURPOSE: The objective of this study was to examine the relationship between physician IT adoption (of various applications) and overall practice satisfaction, as well as satisfaction with the level of computerization at the practice.

METHODS: Data from a Florida survey examining physicians' use of IT and satisfaction were analyzed. Odds ratios (ORs), adjusted for physician demographics and practice characteristics, were computed utilizing logistic regressions to study the independent relationship of electronic health record (EHR) usage, PDA usage, use of e-mail with patients, and the use of disease management software with satisfaction. In addition, we examined the relationship between satisfaction with IT and overall satisfaction with the current medical practice.

RESULTS: In multivariate analysis, EHR users were 5 times more likely to be satisfied with the level of computerization in their practice (OR = 4.93, 95% CI = 3.68-6.61) and 1.8 times more likely to be satisfied with their overall medical practice (OR = 1.77, 95% CI = 1.35-2.32). PDA use was also associated with an increase in satisfaction with the level of computerization (OR = 1.23, 95% CI = 1.02-1.47) and with the overall medical practice (OR = 1.30, 95% CI =
1.07-1.57). E-mail use with patients was negatively related to satisfaction with the level of computerization in the practice (OR = 0.69, 95% CI = 0.54-0.90). Last, physicians who were satisfied with IT were 4 times more likely to be satisfied with the current state of their medical practice (OR = 3.97, 95% CI = 3.29-4.81).

**IMPLICATIONS:** Physician users of IT applications, especially EHRs, are generally satisfied with these technologies. Potential adopters and/or policy makers interested in influencing IT adoption should consider the positive impact that computer automation can have on medical practice.

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