According to a review of recent studies, global healthcare spending on EMR/EHR technology is expected to top $24.8 billion USD in 2017 and continue growing to over $29 billion by 2020. The ongoing, worldwide increases in electronic health record (EHR) and electronic medical record (EMR) adoption and spending on healthcare information technology is spurred primarily by commitment to patient safety. Hospitals using EHR/EMR systems have a 3 to 4 percent lower mortality rate than those that don’t, as EHRs help reduce prescription entry errors and provide access to clinical decision support in the workflow and medication error alerts.

There’s financial incentive to expand healthcare technology as well. The average doctor spends 8 hours a week on paperwork. Studies estimate that during the first 15 years of implementation, EHR/EMR could save around $42 billion USD each year in the costs of paper charting, in both materials and staff hours.¹

Governments and private hospitals across the Asia Pacific region are poised to spend over $794 million on EHR systems by 2018. Are you ready?

RISE OF EHRs IN ASIA PACIFIC
Recognizing the advantages of EHR and healthcare information technology in controlling costs and maintaining care quality, various governments across the Asia Pacific region are poised to spend an estimated $794.6 million on EMR/EHR systems by 2018.² The region is also expected to show the fastest growth in the EHR market of any region in the world between 2015 and 2020, with a compound annual growth rate of 7.1 percent.³

A recent HIMSS APAC survey of Asia Pacific healthcare professionals found that 90 percent use reference books or electronic resources for decision support in their practice. By consolidating those resources to all-electronic solutions and providing access to them conveniently within EHR functions, clinicians have the advantage of being able to quickly consult decision support directly from a patient’s chart or while writing an order, without having to interrupt their workflow.⁴

EHRs also help with healthcare information exchange between countries in the region.
WHAT TECHNOLOGY IS ASIA PACIFIC HEALTHCARE MISSING?

When asked about the most important features of decision support by HIMSS APAC, 80 percent of APAC professionals responded “instant access.” However, that same study found that, depending on the country, between 75 and 100 percent of clinicians were using simple Google searches to find important healthcare information, opening them up to potential misinformation, outdated reports, or assertions that haven’t been professionally verified and placed in clinical context.

Introduction of professional electronic decision support solutions into EHRs has helped connect an increasing number of Asia Pacific professionals to more reliable resources, clinical practice guidelines, and evidence to better inform their decisions. But prevalence of EHR-integrated clinical decision support and its successful adoption by clinicians varies greatly from country to country within the region.

Some healthcare facilities remain hesitant to commit to all-electronic resources and to integrating access within EHRs because of potential problems with loss of power, unreliable internet, and the fear of being unable to access any resources during a power outage scenario. Creating backup plans, implementing reliable information storage solutions, and intelligently managing energy use are necessary steps to achieve success with EHRs in many areas.¹

LOOKING AHEAD

What will the future of healthcare technology look like for Asia Pacific?

Experts to see some of the following trends:

• Technological advancements to support and help professionals better understand clinical decision making

• Greater healthcare information technology adoption in primary and community care settings

• Developing actionable analytics around clinical practice and hospital operations

• Expansion of access to key healthcare information on smartphones and tablets

• More patient engagement, including consumer-facing mobile health information

Wolters Kluwer’s Clinical Effectiveness solutions help healthcare professionals measurably improve the quality and effectiveness of care. We provide evidence-based clinical content and advanced decision support technology wherever healthcare professionals are working, so they can make the best possible decisions for their patients. Solutions include Lexicomp® drug references, Medi-Span® drug data, and UpToDate® clinical decision support, all of which integrate into EMRs and clinical workflows to provide proactive, efficient access to valuable decision support at the point of care.

⁴ http://www.himssasiapac.org/sites/default/files/HIMSSAP_ExclusiveArticles_TheQuestforClinicalInformationinAsiaPacific.pdf
⁵ http://www.himssasiapac.org/sites/default/files/HIMSSAP_ExclusiveArticles_TheQuestforClinicalInformationinAsiaPacific.pdf