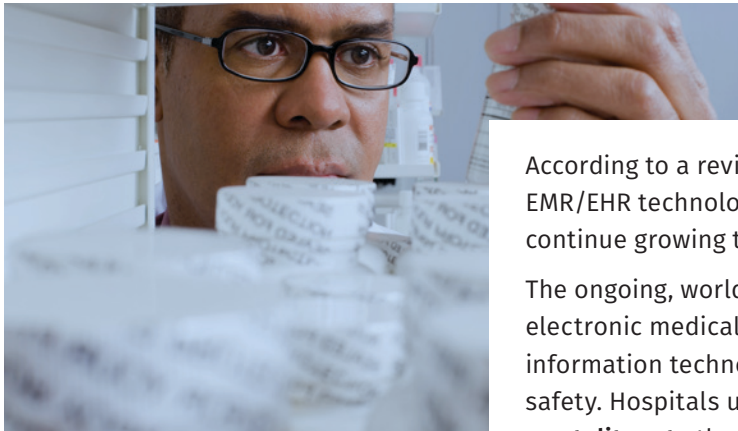


Clinical Drug Information

EHRs and Healthcare Information Technology:

The Solution for Smarter Decisions and Better Care in Brazil



Healthcare providers in Brazil are on pace to spend \$336 million on healthcare IT by 2018.

Are you ready?

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.ⁱ

RISE OF EMRs IN BRAZIL

Healthcare technology adoption in Brazil has advanced alongside the growing need for health services. Brazilian life expectancy has been steadily increasing in the last two decades,ⁱⁱ leading to growth in older population demographics. In addition to increased longevity, Brazilians are demonstrating a steadily rising rate of chronic health problems – in particular, obesity, diabetes, and hypertension – driving general healthcare spending up to over \$580 billion USD a year.ⁱⁱⁱ

Analysis from Frost & Sullivan predicts that EHR spending in Brazil will reach \$336 million USD by 2018, with a compound annual growth rate of 15 percent.^{iv}

“At this point, technology is crucial,” says Liliane Soares, operations manager at Hospital Sabará. “Hospitals are becoming increasingly complex and competitive. These information systems contribute greatly to clinical management through:

- Conduct reminders (alerts)
- Reducing the time of diagnosis
- Providing agility in service
- Possibility of distance medical care (telehealth)
- Exchange of information and knowledge between specialists in any region
- Improvement in financial management, and
- Control of the flow of the patient”

“Interest in adoption of new technologies has been driven mainly by the need to ensure safety and efficiency to improve clinical outcomes in the area of health.”

Vladimir Pizzo
CMIO of Hospital Sirio Libanes

New vendors, software options, and increasing awareness of emerging best practices have helped drive expansion of EHRs and healthcare information technology in Brazil, at private hospitals foremost. “The interest is very much related to the increase in competitiveness and the need to offer differentiated services to improve the experience of the clients,” says Willian Soares, clinical innovation manager at Beneficencia Portuguesa de São Paulo.

EHR adoption has been further spurred by the Ministry of Health, which has begun instituting initiatives and national standards to promote health information sharing, notes Vladimir Pizzo, CMIO of Hospital Sirio Libanes.

But the most important factor driving EHR adoption remains patient safety.

“Interest in adoption of new technologies has been driven mainly by the need to ensure safety and efficiency to improve clinical outcomes in the area of health,” says Pizzo. “Health information systems with electronic prescribing and clinical decision support tools are good examples of technologies that can contribute to the decrease in the number of adverse events related to drug therapy.”



WHAT TECHNOLOGY IS BRAZILIAN HEALTHCARE MISSING?

Clinical decision support tools integrated into EHRs have become a popular feature, helping clinicians reduce the number of adverse drug events patients experience and contributing to shortening the length of hospital stay, both of which are results that “objective data” reveals are “associated with a better patient experience,” Pizzo says.

Nonetheless “improvement in interfaces” is still needed, adds Willian Soares. When EHR solutions are “unfriendly,” it hinders adoption of technology by doctors and health professionals. “There needs to be a sensible increase of investments in interoperability for integration of (EHR) systems with medical devices to reduce manual **input of data**,” he suggests.

Data input also concerns Liliane Soares, who notes that improvement in information exchange would allow healthcare professionals at different locations to share updates to a patient’s record, creating a more complete and reliable history upon which to base treatments.

Other challenges facing Brazilian healthcare technology:

- **Interoperability** - The need to improve healthcare providers’ ability to access information from other organizations and from other facilities within their own organization.
- **Information security** – Safety/privacy of patient information and reliability of electronic systems are paramount to convincing skeptical practitioners to embrace EHR technology.
- **Going paperless** – Despite advances in EHRs and wider acceptance, “the hospital is still a ‘paper mill,’” says Willian Soares. Reviews of current processes are needed to reduce redundancies and eliminate extraneous paper charting.

LOOKING AHEAD

What will the future of healthcare technology look like for Brazil and Latin America? Experts expect to see some of the following trends:

- Technological advancements to support and help professionals better understand clinical decision making
- Expansion of mobile access to health information, particularly access to drug references and medical calculators that professionals might need while on rounds
- Growth of telehealth to reach patients in remote areas, including video conferencing and social media connections
- Big Data and better analytics of the information EHRs are gathering, from clinical trends to genomic data. “We need to begin harnessing and managing so much of the information that has been generated,” says Willian Soares
- More consistent national practices and standards for receiving, processing, and reporting healthcare information

Brazil is quickly evolving along with healthcare technology, and hospitals need trusted partners to help them succeed. Healthcare information technology vendors that are committed to global best practices, scientific research, implementation support, and solution innovation can help a health system reach its EHR goals for improved efficiency, cost savings, and enhanced patient care.

For more information on solutions for Brazil, visit:

www.wolterskluwerCDI.com/latinamerica

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.

ⁱ <http://blog.soliant.com/healthcare-it/ehremr-facts-and-amazing-statistics/>

ⁱⁱ http://2016.export.gov/BRAZIL/build/groups/public/@bg_br/documents/webcontent/bg_br_089142.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.nearshoreamericas.com/sea-opportunities-brazilian-healthcare-industry/>

^{iv} <http://ehealthreporter.com/en/noticia/legacy-2718/>



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