Health Information Compliance Alert

Enforcement News: Cardiologists Top the List of EHR Adopters, New CDC Study Shows

Plus: Energy Subcommittee Advises Congress on Healthcare Cybersecurity Issues

Cardiologists integrate EHR or EMR technologies at a rate of 95.6 percent, the highest of any specialty, a new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention survey suggests.

The study performed by the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics department in coordination with the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) utilized data from the 2015 National Electronic Health Records Survey (NEHRS). Over 10,000 physicians were surveyed "to produce national and state-based estimates of office-based physicians" EHR/EMR adoption, the CDC brief noted.

The sample garnered through a "sequential mixed-mode design" via web, mail, and phone looked at data from August through December of 2015, the study shows. Three areas were covered in the research ⬜ overall EHR/EMR adoption, basic usage, and certified implementation.

Neurologists followed cardiologists at 94.5 percent EHR/EMR adoption while urologists rounded out the top three at 94 percent. Psychiatry saw the lowest levels of "all physician percentages" at 61.3 percent, the study said.

Review the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics survey at https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/ahcd/nehrs/2015_nehrs_ehr_by_specialty.pdf.

In other news ...

As cyber attacks continue to escalate in the healthcare sector, a Congressional Subcommittee urged the government and the private sector to work together to solve the crisis.

In an April 4, 2017 hearing, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations showed that more needs to be done to bolster cybersecurity and called for both parties to coordinate efforts, seek new innovations, and find the leaders in the industry to combat the problem.

"As technology becomes increasingly integrated with all levels of our healthcare, cyber threats pose a challenge to the entire sector," said House Energy and Commerce Chair Representative **Greg Walden** during a Congressional hearing on cybersecurity in healthcare, an April 4, 2017 news release stated. "Everyone ⬜ from the smallest rural hospitals, to large providers and device manufacturers ⬜ faces some level of exposure and risk."

Some popular suggestions that spoke to the issue came from one of the hearing's presenters, **Terence M. Rice, CISO** and vice president of IT risk management at Merck & Co. Inc. He recommended to the Subcommittee that the group "appoint a healthcare cybersecurity liaison to the private sector, create an appendix on cybersecurity to agency plans, and facilitate exercises and simulations," the release said.

Other ideas mentioned education on the cybersecurity matters and looking at areas in healthcare where implementations are working.

All agreed that the cost of lost data that impacts privacy and security is great and something needs to be done quickly to overcome the increased risks. "This isn't just about protecting patient data or information ⬜ this is about patient safety," warned Representative **Tim Murphy**, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

To read the press release, visit
https://energycommerce.house.gov/news-center/press-releases/suboversight-examines-ways-bolster-cybersecurity-efforts-health-care.